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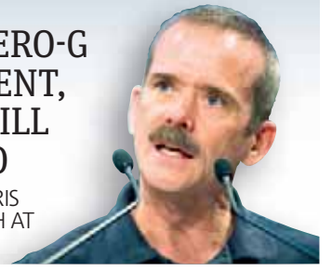
THIS IS A ZERO-G ENVIRONMENT, SO AN 'F' WILL HAVE TO DO

EX-ASTRONAUT CHRIS HADFIELD TO TEACH AT WATERLOO PAGE 10



OPP, TTC ... close enough

Transit enforcement officers could have their 'special constable' status reinstated by next year, allowing them to make arrests PAGE 3

Zombie horde shambles into ghost town

The Walking Dead TV show brings ton of tourist dollars to barren Grantville PAGE 22

Sochi hockey duds are red, white and new

New uniforms unveiled, along with an alternate fan-favourite black set PAGE 8

SO ABOUT THAT $1 BILLION

Premier Kathleen Wynne speaks to the media at Queen's Park on Tuesday after the auditor general reported that the Liberal government's decisions to cancel two gas plants in Oakville and Mississauga will cost Ontario taxpayers up to $1.1 billion. Full story, page 4. NATHAN DENETT/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Council gives Scarborough subway the OK

Mayor supports tax hike. Ford also vows to fight for more subways, go after planned LRTs

In a close 24-20 vote and a major victory for Mayor Rob Ford, city council has confirmed its approval of a Scarborough subway that could cost Toronto taxpayers $1 billion over the next 30 years.

The decision Tuesday evening means a fully funded seven-stop LRT is off the table as a possible replacement for the aging Scarborough SRT.

Councillors who voted against the subway said it will mean higher debt, taxes and reduced transit services for other parts of the city.

Vowing to campaign on subways again in next year's municipal election, Ford promised to go after planned LRTs on Finch West and Sheppard East.

In a decision he said kept him awake at night, the mayor also supported a 1.6- per cent property tax levy (to be phased in over three years) to pay Toronto's share of the subway, estimated to cost between $2.5 billion and $3 billion.

Ford said he'll seek a public/private partnership to keep the increase to a minimum.

The tense day of debate saw several councillors switch their support.

Scarborough's Paul Ainslie, a member of the mayor's executive committee, drew the ire of Ford and his supporters when he said he couldn't get behind the subway because he feared it would end in a five-per-cent property tax increase.

"He should not be representing the people of Scarborough," an angry Coun. Doug Ford told reporters.

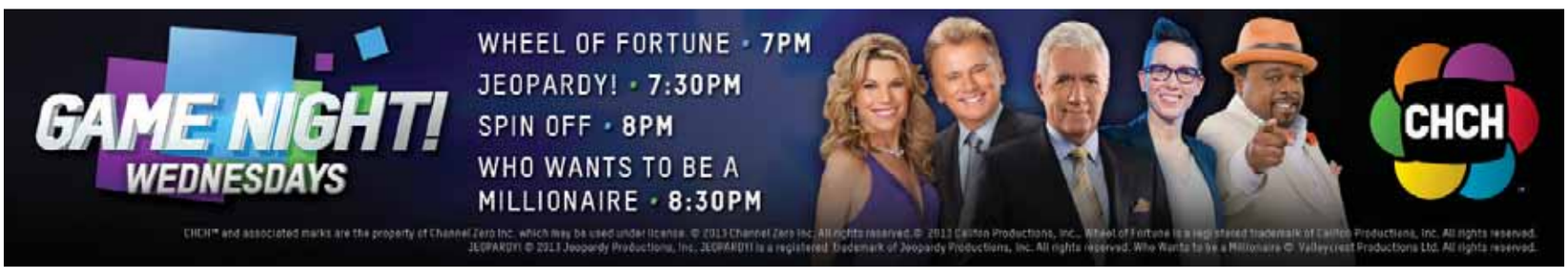
"When he knocks on the door next year for the election we're going to make it very clear he does not support the people of his area."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Probably not

"I don't know if I could do a back flip, but if I could I would."

Mayor Rob Ford



Celebrating A DECADE OF PUMPKIN Devotion

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Nuit Blanche fatality

Police seek suspect in stabbing

Toronto police are looking for a suspect in the stabbing death of 19-year-old Rameez Khalid during the Nuit Blanche art festival early Sunday morning.

On Tuesday police identified the suspect as Emanuel Lozada, 22, a Venezuelan immigrant who lives in Toronto. He is wanted on a second-degree murder charge in the incident, which took place at Richmond Street East, west of York Street.

Police say there were two scenes tied to the murder. Det. Scott Whittemore of Toronto police's homicide squad said Tuesday that there was an altercation between Khalid and a group of men inside a pop-up rave — not formally affiliated with Nuit Blanche — on University Avenue, just south of Queen West.

When Khalid and a friend of his left the party, that same group of men approached Khalid and a friend as they were walking along Richmond Street, where the fatal stabbing took place.

"There were lots of people involved in the fight," said Whittemore. "There may have been people who took photos and videos of this fight."

Police are asking anyone with information to call 911. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Rameez Khalid was stabbed to death during Nuit Blanche. CONTRIBUTED

The installation Forever Bicycles, by Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, lit up Nathan Phillips Square during Nuit Blanche on Saturday. CARLOS OSORIO/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Nuit Blanche: Art walk or Woodstock?

Straddling the line. Attendees and venue owners report drugs, fighting and vandalism

Walking down Toronto's University Avenue on Saturday night, Shane Stephenson didn't have to smell the pot smoke to read the crowd.

"I definitely passed a few people who were openly broadcasting the fact that they were on acid," said Stephenson, 26. "I jokingly told my friend if you tried to drug test everyone on the street, probably only one in four would pass."

The Mohawk College student was one of more than a million people touring closed downtown streets to take in Nuit Blanche's ephemeral installations — and witness less-artistic drunken fist-fights and puddles of vomit.

"It is supposed to be kind of weird — everyone is going to be intoxicated in some kind of way," Stephenson said.

But as attendance at the annual dusk-to-dawn festival has swelled, everyone has a different vision of where the line between art festival and street party should be drawn.

This year two people were stabbed on the night of the festival, one fatally. Rameez Khalid, 19, was killed near Richmond and York Streets, around the corner from art exhibits on University Avenue.

Festival organizers have refused to answer questions about security in the wake of the death.

Reasonable outcome?

"Is it perfect? When you put a million people in a confined location ... something might happen."

Artist John Notten, who said there was nothing out of hand at his exhibit, Shrine

"Because there were some incidents in the evening that we're not involved with, we're just having to tell people that this is a police matter," said Anastasia Saradoc, a media relations supervisor with the City of Toronto.

A man was stabbed last year on the night of the festival, and in 2011 25-year-old Jefflin Beals was shot twice near Trinity Bellwoods Park, where art was on display.

Drunken vandalism prompted Toronto's Eaton Centre to pull out of the festival this year.

"While we didn't feel this reflected the majority of Nuit Blanche attendees, there was definitely a minority who were causing quite significant damage on the property," said Meredith Vlitas, senior marketing director with the Eaton Centre.

Dave Dyment, a member of Nuit Blanche's advisory committee, said that while the festival changes from year to year as it moves locations, he does not think the personality of attendees has shifted from art lovers to party goers.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Brampton. Basement suites polarize residents

A proposal to legalize basement suites in Brampton has left residents on both sides of the controversial issue with misgivings.

"There has to be a rule in place — you don't get three families or 11 people in a two-bedroom place," says longtime Brampton resident Larry Taylor.

Taylor says he's tired of seeing people in illegal apartments crowding neighbourhoods, not paying property tax and straining the city's infrastructure.

"I've lived here since 1985 — the thought of moving out of Brampton is prevalent."

The night before, he was one of dozens who pleaded their case in front of councillors at an evening planning committee meeting.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Rooming house

Two in hospital after west-end fire

Fire officials say two people have been sent to hospital with life-threatening injuries after flames tore through a Toronto rooming house, trapping some residents inside.

Firefighters were called to the house in the city's west end at about 8 a.m. Tuesday.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

TTC. Officers could regain special constable status

TTC transit enforcement officers could have their "special constable" status, which includes power to make arrests, reinstated by 2014.

The Toronto Police Services Board agreed Monday to restore the special authority, as long as the police and the TTC consent to implement an independent complaints process and public awareness campaign.

That agreement could be approved as early as next month.

Transit cops, who catch turnstile jumpers and discourage panhandling in the subway, were stripped of the special constable designation in 2010 following allegations they were exceeding their authority.

Without it, TTC officers can't arrest anyone unless they personally witness an offence.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

‘Big ... bad mistake’ could cost taxpayers up to $1.1B

Creative accounting. The cost of the Grits cancelling power plants had been pegged at $40M, then $310M

Premier Kathleen Wynne admitted it was a “big ... bad mistake” to scrap power plants in Oakville and Mississauga after a report by Ontario’s financial watchdog found taxpayers are on the hook for up to $1.1 billion.

That number was the startling tally Tuesday from auditor general Bonnie Lysyk in a long-awaited report on the price tag for scuttling the Oakville generating station three years ago — the first of two cancellations to save five Liberal seats in the 2011 election.

Lysyk concluded the tab for cancelling Oakville and relocating the plant to Napanee could skyrocket to $815 million — dramatically more than the $310 million the Ontario Power Authority had estimated and exponentially higher than the $40 million the Grits initially claimed.

Wynne was grim-faced as she faced questions about the report.

“Money is too tight for tax dollars to be spent in any way that is not productive,” acknowledged the premier, who inherited the problem from her predecessor Dalton McGuinty.

“It was a big mistake ... it was a bad mistake,” she added, promising changes that will give municipalities more say over power plant locations. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Scandal after scandal

Pricey way to ‘save a few Liberal seats’

Opposition parties, which had also opposed the plants, said the revelations are the latest in a line of scandals plaguing the Liberals, including eHealth Ontario and the ORNGE air-ambulance service.

NDP Leader Andrea Horwath slammed the expenditure of “over a billion dollars to save a few Liberal seats.”

Scarborough is moving on up: First a subway, now a possible ‘High Line’ park

Assuming the Scarborough Rapid Transit line route, pictured at left, isn’t needed for transit, it could make a dandy park, says Coun. Glenn DeBaeremaeker. DeBaeremaeker raised the idea Tuesday on how to replace the aging 6.4-kilometre-long line that runs from the Kennedy subway station to the Scarborough Town Centre. Noting the line’s east end is an elevated concrete structure, he said it could be turned into a linear park like Manhattan’s High Line park, right. It may not offer views of the Hudson River, but it would give people in the growing neighbourhood around the town centre a new amenity, DeBaeremaeker said. “We could call it the Scarborough High Line,” he said. “I think it would be a very dramatic, very exciting feature for local people, but also a tourist attraction.” The Toronto Transit Commission is willing to produce a report on the idea, which would actually save taxpayers money on teardown costs. TEXT: TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE; PHOTOS, LEFT: TORSTAR IMAGES FILE, RIGHT: GETTY IMAGES FILE

Thumbs up. ‘Toronto has really made us proud’: Pan American Games prez

When Mario Vázquez Raña stood up to announce in 2009 that Toronto would host the next Pan American Games, he had been dazzled by the city’s “great illusion.”

Toronto had put together a $2.4-billion bid — promising new aquatic centres and stadiums, plus an athletes’ village — in the hopes of transforming the city’s crumbling sports facilities into world-class arenas.

Mario Vázquez Raña HANDOUT

Now the president of the Pan American Sports Organization, says the city has pulled it off. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Theory debunked. MS not caused by narrowed veins, Canadian study finds

Canadian researchers have finally laid to rest an international debate about a possible cause of multiple sclerosis in a major study that repudiates a theory from Italian vascular surgeon Paolo Zamboni that the disease is the result of narrowing of veins from the brain to the heart.

A commentary accompanying their research, published Tuesday in The Lancet, says the “solid and well-balanced” findings serve as a “death knell” to the theory and that research into it (excluding this Canadian study) is a waste of time and money.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Flat fees. Part-time Ontario university students to get some tuition relief by 2015

Ontario universities will only be permitted to charge full tuition to students taking 80 per cent or more of a full course load starting in 2015, to avoid charging full price for as little as 60 per cent, as has been done at the University of Toronto.

A proposal by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities to overhaul tuition billing indicates plans to increase the threshold to 70 per cent at all universities for the 2014-2015 academic year and then to 80 per cent in fall 2015.

U of T currently charges students the so-called “flat fee” for as little as 60 per cent of a full load, the only Ontario university to do so. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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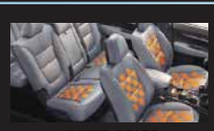
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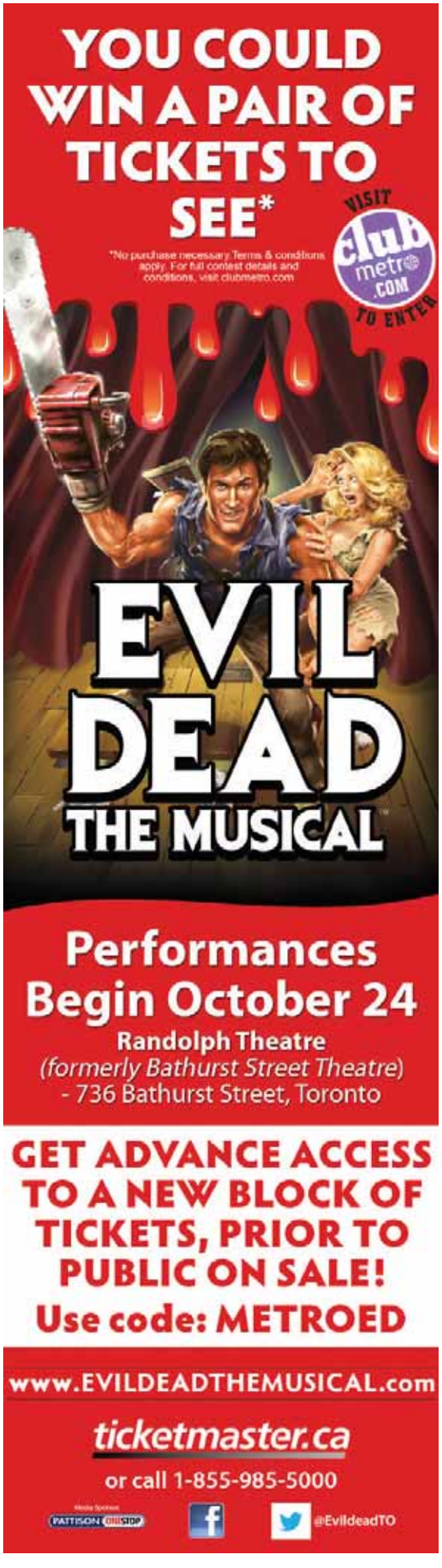
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Women's surfing contest hopes to ride wave of success

Leah Oke, of Port Renfrew, B.C., competes Sunday in the fourth annual women's Queen of the Peak surf championship in Tofino, B.C., where she took first place in longboard. Organizers hope the amateur event will someday become the qualifier for the first-ever, female-only surfing contest sanctioned by the Association of Surfing Professionals in Canada. COURTESY KYLER VOS-TOURISM TOFINO

China

Official fired over son's extravagant 3-day wedding

A Chinese village Communist Party official was fired Tuesday after reports of his son's three-day, $260,000 US wedding emerged, media reported.

The official Xinhua News Agency said that the party discipline inspection commission in Beijing's Chaoyang district made the ruling Tuesday against Ma Linxiang, a deputy party director in the village of Qingheying.

Though the local discipline inspection commission found no evidence that Ma used public funds for the wedding, it said the extravagance of the celebration ran counter to the party's strictures.

One wedding ceremony was held at the China National Convention Center, which was a venue for the 2008 Olympics. Nationally known entertainers were hired to perform. In China's pervasive culture of corruption, weddings and other major family events have become a front for bribe-taking in the form of lavish gifts.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Laval mayoral hopeful fears for her safety

Campaign manager assaulted. Claire Le Bel gets police protection after releasing recording of phone call with ex-mayor

An unnerving sequence of incidents has prompted a mayoral candidate to seek police protection in scandal-plagued Laval, Que.

The candidate first released a phone conversation she recorded with her former boss, ex-mayor Gilles Vaillancourt, who faces criminal gangsterism charges.

Despite his legal troubles, Vaillancourt was overheard offering to get involved in her campaign and help with financing, which echoed similar offers he is alleged to have made to other politicians over the years. The candidate, Claire Le Bel, refused the offer and publicly released the recording Monday.

Claire Le Bel THE CANADIAN PRESS

Later that same day, her campaign manager was assaulted.

Le Bel told a news conference Tuesday that she fears for her safety and no longer drives her car alone. She asked for and received police protection, she said. She also said her aide is doing well after the Monday night assault.

She said her campaign manager Reny Gagnon has filed a complaint with provincial police, but wouldn't provide any details about the circumstances surrounding the attack.

As for the recording, Le Bel told reporters the 50-minute conversation was taped as a precaution in August. In it, Vaillancourt asks Le Bel how the campaign is going and whether she'd recruited all her candidates. He discusses financing and asks for a private meeting with Le Bel.

Le Bel said investigators with Quebec's Charbonneau inquiry were made aware of the tape the next day, but they decided not to act on the information and deemed it a "low priority." So Le Bel decided to go public.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Sochi style: Can Team Canada pull it off?

PHOTOS BY FRANK GUNN/THE CANADIAN PRESS; ILLUSTRATION BY METRO

Looking ahead

On the road to Sochi Olympics

More than a month after the first leak, Hockey Canada and Nike officially unveiled our hockey jerseys for the 2014 Winter Olympics. Amid club music and laser lights, youth players skated onto the ice at Maple Leaf Gardens sporting the red, white and alternate black uniforms that the men's, women's and sledge hockey teams will wear at the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The event was another marker on the road to Sochi.

THE CANADIAN PRESS AND TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

The big to-do

"Their mouths dropped, a little awestruck. They didn't realize what they were here for. When they saw the jersey for the first time, it hit them like it hits any NHL guy that's going to don that jersey."

Hockey Hall of Famer and former Canadian Olympian Joe Nieuwendyk, about the teenage players from the Toronto area who were invited to model the jerseys.

Petro Canada ad?

Critics say the red and white jerseys with a stem-less maple leaf resemble Petro Canada's logo.

- But Nike's Olympic creative director Ken Black said the main inspirations for the design were Canada's 1920 and 1972 Olympic hockey jerseys.

Red, white and black

3

Canada will be the only team in Sochi with a third jersey. "The fans like black, there's no question, and so do the players. But our real colours are red and white," Hockey Canada president and CEO Bob Nicholson said.

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Sen. Duffy in hot water again with new allegations

Fresh findings. Auditor flags series of payments to Mike Duffy's friend Gerald Donahue, a former TV technician

An RCMP allegation that Sen. Mike Duffy awarded $65,000 in Senate contracts to a friend who did little actual work is the latest twist in the case of the troubled former Conservative.

The Mounties filed a production order in an Ottawa court on Tuesday to gain access to bank account records related to the allegation. They are looking at new allegations of fraud and breach of trust against Duffy, based on fresh findings.

Sen. Mike Duffy THE CANADIAN PRESS

"That investigation determined that Sen. Duffy hired a friend as a consultant over an approximate four-year period and paid him a total of approximately $65,000 during that time, for little or no apparent work," wrote Cpl. Greg Horton, the lead investigator.

Duffy said in an email that it would be "inappropriate for me to comment while these matters are being examined by the RCMP." No charges have been laid against Duffy.

An auditor flagged a series of payments to Duffy's friend Gerald Donahue, a former TV technician.

Between 2009 and 2012, Duffy asked the Senate to pay Donahue for a range of writing services including speeches, advice on web-page design and development and general media consulting.

But Donahue told police that he didn't do any writing and never worked on the website. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Chris Hadfield. Retired astronaut turns prof at University of Waterloo

The former Canadian astronaut who gained a global audience with his musical performances in space will be taking on a new job as professor of aviation at an Ontario university.

The University of Waterloo says Chris Hadfield's first task on campus will be assisting research into why some astronauts get fainting spells when they return to Earth — knowledge it says will also be useful for elderly people prone to falling.

The school on Tuesday announced the appointment of the ex-astronaut, who retired in July shortly after getting back from five months on the International Space Station.

During the mission, Hadfield became the first Canadian commander of the space station and performed more than 130 science experiments. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Chris Hadfield gestures shortly after the landing in Dzhezkazgan, Kazakhstan, last May. He will be taking on a new job as professor of aviation at the University of Waterloo. MIKHAIL METZEL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Endangered liaisons

Spy allegations put Canada-Brazil military ties at risk: Experts

A carefully cultivated military relationship with Brazil could be damaged by the unfolding spy drama involving Canada's super-secret eavesdropping agency, defence and diplomacy experts say.

Since late spring, a platoon of Canadian soldiers has been embedded with a Brazilian army unit as part of the United Nations peacekeeping mission in Haiti.

The deployment, slated to run until Christmas, has been considered an important bridge-building effort with South America's biggest military power.

Walter Dorn, a professor at the Canadian Forces Staff College in Toronto, says the scandal will give Brazil second thoughts about Canada as a reliable partner. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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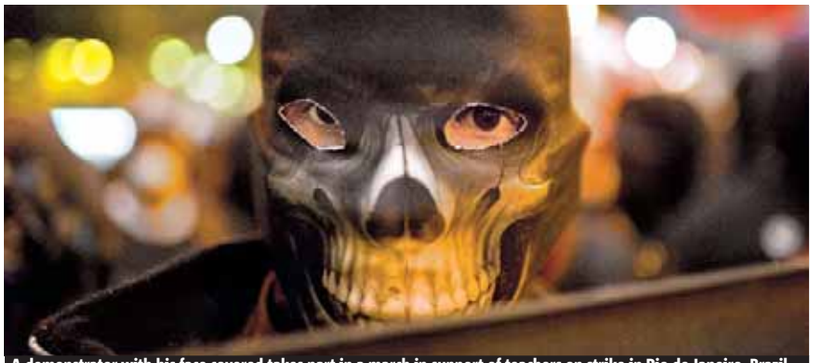


A demonstrator with his face covered takes part in a march in support of teachers on strike in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Monday night. FELIPE DANA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Teacher strikes take a violent turn in Brazil

Started off peaceful. Teachers have been off the job demanding better pay for almost two months

Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo woke up to scenes of destruction on Tuesday following violent overnight demonstrations in support of teachers on strike asking for higher wages.

In Rio, a largely peaceful rally by some 20,000 demonstrators turned violent when small groups of masked protesters started hurling rocks and Molotov cocktails at banks, stores and restaurants and set fire to a passenger bus.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ongoing protests

Protests over transportation costs began in June.

- These demonstrations snowballed into a nationwide movement against high taxes, corruption and high World Cup spending.

Migrant ship tragedy

Suspected captain held as Italian divers find more bodies

Italy on Tuesday detained a 35-year-old Tunisian man suspected of being the captain of a boat carrying African migrants that sank off the tiny island of Lampedusa, Italy. Divers, meanwhile, recovered dozens of additional bodies from the wreckage, raising the death toll to 275.

Just 155 migrants, most if not all from Eritrea, survived Thursday's shipwreck. Survivors said there were some 500 would-be asylum-seekers aboard when the ship capsized.

Prosecutors in Agrigento, Sicily, said they had detained the Tunisian suspect, who was transferred from Lampedusa to Agrigento under police custody aboard a ferry. He faces charges of aiding illegal immigration and multiple counts of homicide. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

One year later. Girl describes Taliban attack and survival in new book

Seven days after the Pakistani Taliban shot her in the head, Malala Yousafzai woke up confused in a place that wasn't home. Her first thought? "Thank God I'm not dead."

Yousafzai, whose campaign for girls' right to education made her a Taliban target, describes the shooting and its aftermath in a book that came out Tuesday, a day before the anniversary of the assassination attempt.

In an excerpt in The Sunday Times, the now 16-year-old describes riding in a school van with her girlfriends when it was stopped by two men, including the gunman who shot Yousafzai in the left eye socket at close range.

After waking, she found out that she had been taken from Pakistan to Birmingham, England, for specialist treatment. The book excerpt describes how she gradually regained her sight and her voice and was reunited with her parents.

Yousafzai has been mentioned as a possible contender for the Nobel Peace Prize to be announced Friday.

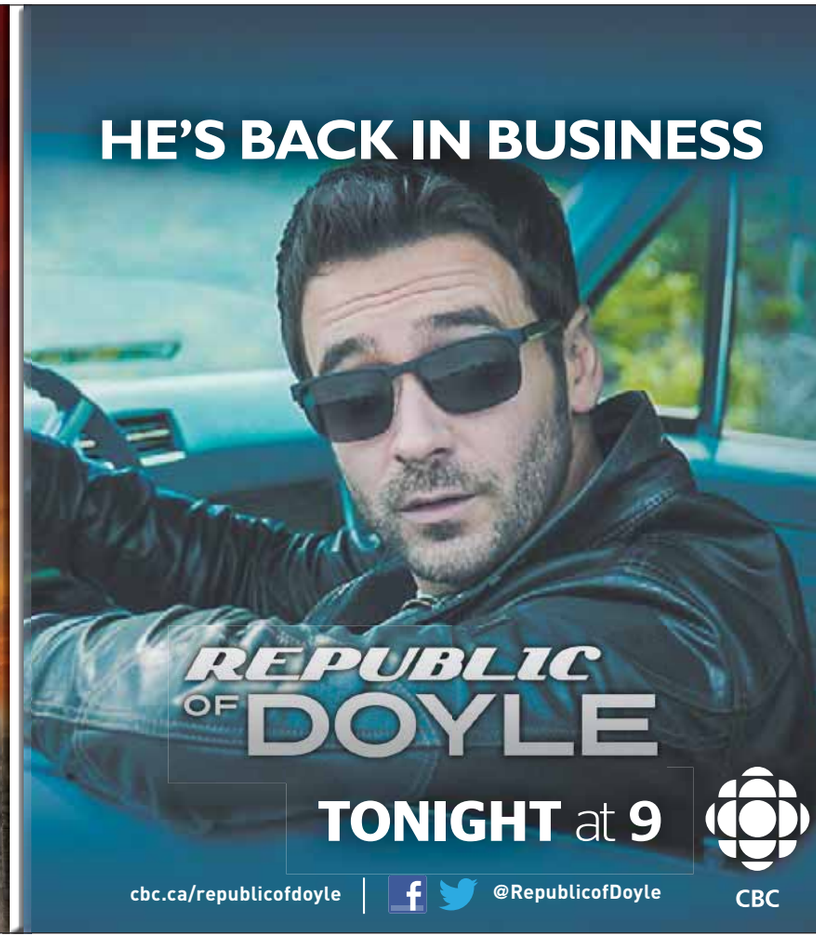
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Heinous crimes

Saudi preacher sentenced to 8 years in prison

An ultraconservative Muslim preacher in Saudi Arabia was sentenced to eight years in prison and 800 lashes for raping and beating his five-year-old daughter to death, official media said Tuesday.

Fayhan al-Ghamdi, who often preached on television, was convicted of raping, beating and burning his daughter Lama, crushing her skull and tearing off her nails. She died months later in a Saudi hospital. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



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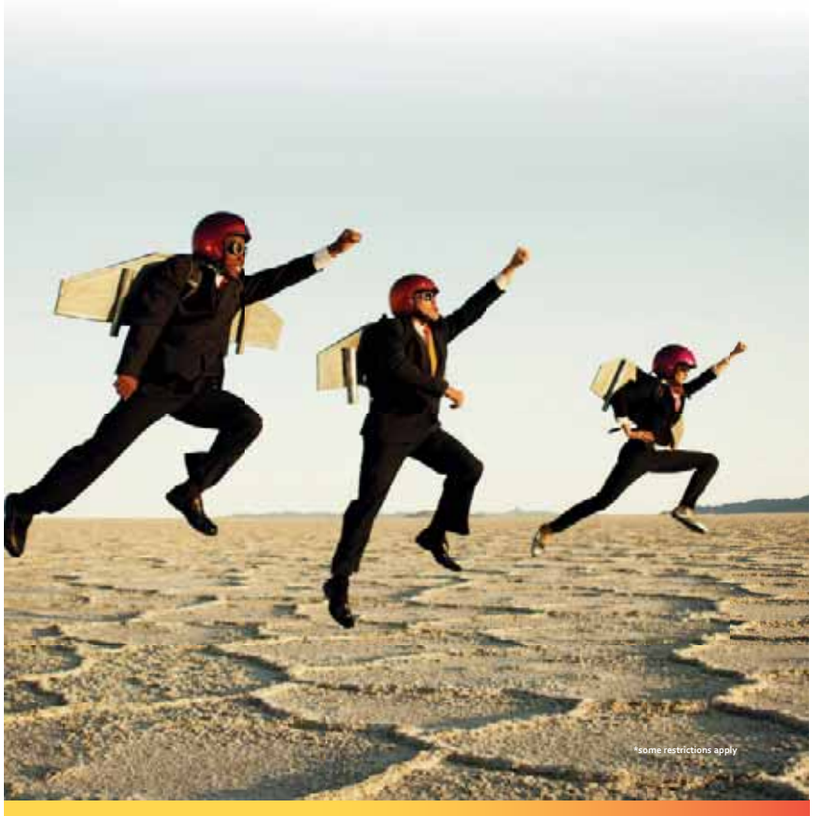

www.hrpa.ca/METRO

Alberta is iPhone country, according to a new survey. So naturally this woman is using an iPhone as she snaps events at last July's Calgary Stampede. JEFF MCINTOSH/THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

Yak, yak: Cellphones are shaping our nation

Talk, talk! Canadians are taking calls on everything from iPhones to Androids, report says

We're a diverse country. Just check our smartphones.

Alberta is iPhone country.

Toronto consumers and anglophones living in Montreal are the most faithful to BlackBerry.

Vancouverites are most into Google Android phones.

That's the message in a report by the Media Technology Monitor, which probes how consumers embrace technology.

"It isn't surprising to see that in a country as diverse as Canada you're going to see diversity not just between anglophones and francophones but also the regions as well," said MTM executive Andrea Sharkey.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

By the numbers

68%

Only 68 per cent of francophones in Quebec City own a cellphone, according to a study by the Media Technology Monitor.

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Label mixup

Twitter gives Tweeter a boost

Tweeter is not Twitter.

The bankrupt electronics retailer's stock resumed trading Tuesday under "THEGQ." Its old symbol was "TWTRQ."

That was apparently too similar to "TWTR," the symbol proposed by Twitter when it filed plans for its highly anticipated initial public offering. Some confused investors sent Tweeter's stock up as much as 1,400 per cent.

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THE FUTURE IS HERE, BUT NO ONE CARES

JUST SAYIN'

Paul Sullivan
metronews.ca

If you were ever a kid, you'll remember dreaming about having your very own two-way wrist communicator.

Jimmy Olsen had one to stay in touch with Superman. All he had to do was press the button, and a cool zee-zee-zee sound would summon the Man of Steel.

In fact, anyone who was anyone in the fantasy universe had one, from Dick Tracy to Captain Kirk to Knight Rider to the Power Rangers.

Now you can have one, thanks to Samsung, which has just released the Galaxy Gear. This device gives your wrist a very high-tech panache and allows you to link up to your Galaxy phone via Bluetooth and talk at your wrist.

Too bad the fantasy is still better than the reality.

Because the Gear has no brain, i.e. SIM card, of its own, it's pretty much a local version of the phone in your pocket. And only if that phone is a Galaxy Note 3. You'll have to wait for the next version to hook up to more phones and functionality. But if you want to be the first Inspector Gadget on your block and you have $300 to spend on a half-baked idea, knock yourself out.

Still Samsung has succeeded at one thing … its outstanding commercials recapture the gee-whizzery of the wrist phone, as they take us through a gallery of fantastic applications from the comics and movies leading to the next big thing: Your BFF right there on your wrist, ready to two-way, just like Jimmy Olsen and Superman.

What's interesting is that I don't care. And neither, apparently, does anyone else.

The Galaxy Gear has been released with a big tech thud.

It's partly because the watch itself appears to be a work in progress, but the Samsung ads are technically accurate — if oversimplified — and you have to wonder why the smart wrist watch — and other gee-whizzicker products such as Google Glass — don't bring the magic.

Aren't we delighted that the future has finally arrived?

Maybe it's because now that it's here, we don't really like it. It comes with baggage, such as greenhouse gases and Miley Cyrus. And now that we can communicate without wires, it's all too obvious that most of us don't really have anything to say. Hashtag fail.

And instead of escaping into the next future, we're so freaked out by the one we're in that we can only imagine dystopian scenarios featuring the zombie apocalypse, where the zombies know where we are at all times thanks to GPS.

The Galaxy Gear is really an old-fashioned idea. It belongs in the Dick Tracy era with our collective childhood. Your real mobile device is much more powerful and just as handy.

The real future, sad to say, isn't for kids.

ZOOM

Many scribbles make light work

JANNE PARVIAINEN/REX FEATURES

Photo captured with long exposure

A light illusionist did his best to show himself and his wife suffering the hot flashes of a flu. Janne Parviainen, 33, from Helsinki, Finland, created this unsettling image using amazing light techniques and long-exposure photography. The Finn told Metro he created this dazzling light display out of boredom. METRO

Making light of the flu

"Having a really bad flu made me focus and concentrate on getting this photograph right. It was like a battle against the odds, but I kept telling myself I could do this."

Janne Parviainen, artist and photographer from Helsinki, Finland

How the artist pulled off the light effect

How did Parviainen pull off this mesmerizing image?

"I set up the camera for a long-exposure photograph," the artist begins. "Then, I created the lines using a flashing red and blue LED light. I was crawling and jumping from one end of the room to the next, all to make sure that every inch of the room was covered in the light." METRO

Exposure time in minutes

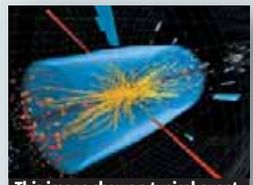
30

minutes is the time frame Parviainen used to create his long-exposure photograph. All of his surreal photographs, the Finnish photographer claims, are produced manually with no post-production alterations or enhancements.

Clickbait

ANDREW FIFIELD
andrew.fifield@metronews.ca

If all that Nobel news about Francois Englert and Peter Higgs winning the physics prize for their Higgs boson work wasn't enough to turn you on to science for the week, then perhaps the amazing space-is-scary film Gravity and what astronauts have had to say about it has piqued your interest. Here's some breezy reading about science and space while you're tuned in.



This image shows a typical event in the search for the Higgs boson.
COURTESY CERN

Bad Astronomy:

Phil Plait waxes ecstatic about all things extraterrestrial in some of the friendliest wording you'll find on topics that typically trend toward dense. A word of warning: He's generous with links, so it's easy to get lost. (slate.com/blogs/bad_astronomy.html)

Mother Jones:

OK, so this isn't a blog at all. But Kiera Butler, Mother Jones' science writer, is a required addition to your RSS feed for topics ranging from scary business like antibiotic overprescription to comforting news like the benefits of frozen food. (motherjones.com/authors/kiera-butler)

Planetary Society:

The writers who lovingly tend the Planetary Society blogs section are serious eggheads. But if you happen to be a quick study with genius jargon and academic acronyms, you'll soon be up to date on the Comet of the Century. Did you even know one of those was coming? (planetary.org/blogs)

Twitter

@metropicks asked: @Cmdr_Hadfield signed on as an aviation professor at the University of Waterloo. What should his first lesson be about?

@PiscesCurse: How to make a kick-ass music video from space to top all others!

@damianpenny: He should explain how Joel eats and sleeps and other science fact. #mst3k

@_J_T_V_: how to grow an Aviation spec moustache

@hilsmol: "Bad-Asstronomics 101"

@giggyalso: don't take gravity lightly

@josephinecleo: how to master the perfect side-part in space. Astronauts need to look good for the cosmos!

@rurbonas: Calculating the fastest route out of Waterloo and how to avoid Kitchener entirely.

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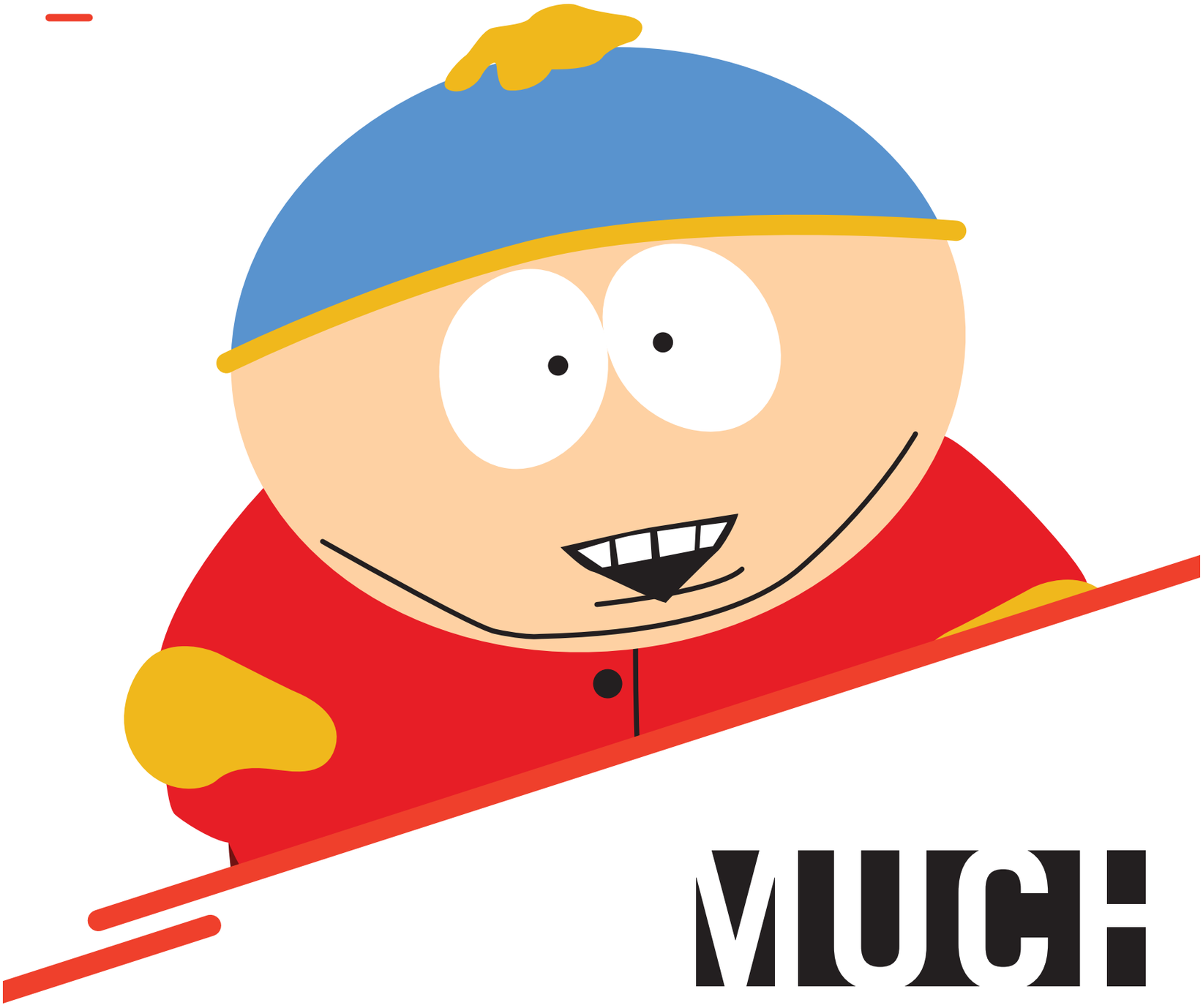

MUCH

Which celeb driver are you?

You may have moves like Jagger, but when it comes to your driving style, who is your celebrity match? Despite Canada's reputation as a modest nation, a global survey for Kijiji reveals that when it comes to cars, Canadian drivers value style over substance. In fact, as you'll see, there may be more "Beliebers" on our roads than ones saying "hit me baby one more time." METRO

Image Seekers (27 per cent)

Key values
Brand, design and style are most important.

Global average
23 per cent.

Celebrity Match
Justin Bieber — his Ferarri F430 is rumoured to be as important to him as his hair.

Efficiency Seekers (22 per cent)

Key values
Brand is less of a priority, but reliability, efficiency, and running costs matter.

Global average
22 per cent.

Celebrity Match
Leonardo DiCaprio — he loves hybrids as much as he loves Victoria's Secret models.

Performance Seekers (17 per cent)

Key values
Handling and power are higher up on the list of priorities.

Global average
17 per cent.

Celebrity Match
Jay Leno — he spends as much time shining his muscle cars or at the race tracks as he does prepping his monologues.

Necessity Drivers (19 per cent)

Key values
Say a car is just a tool to get from A to B; most likely to drive a silver or grey Chevy/Toyota/Chrysler.

Global average
17 per cent.

Celebrity Match
James Franco — whether it's luxury or not, he just needs his car to get to his next class.

Risk Takers (five per cent)

Key values
Parks carelessly, more likely to drink and drive.

Global average
11 per cent.

Celebrity Match
Lindsay Lohan— do we really need to elaborate?

Accident Prone (five per cent)

Key values
Despite less obvious risk taking they are still prone to accidents.

Global average
Six per cent.

Celebrity Match
Britney Spears — though she hasn't run over a Police officer's foot or hit a paparazzo lately.

Cautious Drivers (five per cent)

Key values
Rarely has accidents or damages their car.

Global average
Four per cent.

Celebrity Match
Betty White — her driving record is as golden as her television career.

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If you've seen one Tom Hanks, you haven't seen them all

New movie. The star of Captain Phillips has avoided being typecast over the years and continually delivers diverse performances

IN FOCUS
Richard Crouse
scene@metronews.ca

When you think of the movies of Arnold Schwarzenegger or Sylvester Stallone, gut busting action comes to mind. The names Steve Martin and Adam Sandler are forever connected to comedy, while Daniel Day Lewis is synonymous with serious drama. Meg Ryan? She'll always be a romantic comedy star just as the mere mention of Robert Eglund's name can send a chill down the spine.

But what about Tom Hanks? Hanks is a rarity among A-listers. He's an actor who has avoided stereotyping by pasting together a resumé that includes almost every genre of film.

This weekend he stars in Captain Phillips, a drama based on the true story of the 2009 hijacking of the MV Maersk Alabama by Somali pirates.

It's a heroic role — in real life President Obama said Capt. Richard Phillips' courage "is a model for all Americans" — but it's a far cry from his last movie, Cloud Atlas, which saw him play three characters, one of which tossed a critic out of a skyscraper window.

His varied IMDB listing includes everything from comedies like Splash ("What you looking at? You never seen a guy who slept with a fish before?") to Academy-Award-winning dramas like Philadelphia, where he played a gay lawyer with AIDS suing his firm for discrimination, and Forrest Gump.

In the kids' classic Toy Story (and its subsequent sequels) he's Woody, a stuffed pull-string cowboy doll. Director John Lasseter says he wanted Hanks to play the character because of his "ability to take emotions and make them appealing."

Much darker is Road to Perdition, the 2002 Sam Mendes film that cast Hanks as Michael Sullivan, Sr., an

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Tom Hanks' Captain Phillips opens this weekend. CONTRIBUTED

ace hitman who must protect his son from a mob assassin.

"I just got this guy," says Hanks. "If you're a man, and you've got offspring … emotionally, it's devastating."

Different still is Nothing in Common, a dramedy that saw Hanks play a successful advertising executive trying to cope with his parents' (Jackie Gleason and Eva Marie Saint) break up.

"(It) has a bit of a split personality," Hanks said, "because we're trying to be very funny in the same movie in which we're trying to be very touching."

Hanks says, "I'm not looking for any particular kind of story," and his varied approach to his work hasn't hurt him one bit. Recently he was named America's "best-liked movie star," in a poll by Public Policy Polling.

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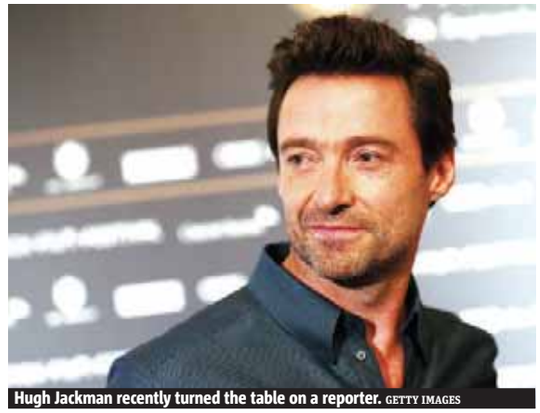

Hugh Jackman recently turned the table on a reporter. GETTY IMAGES

Superstar Hugh Jackman is probably used to getting recognized in public, but this time, a reporter interviewing Jackman on the red carpet was left flustered when the actor recognized him from his school days.

Jackman interrupted reporter Rollo Ross during an interview at the Zurich Film Festival in Switzerland recently. Jackman was there to receive the Golden Icon award and promote his new film, Prisoners.

"Rollo, I'm sorry man," said Jackman in a stern teacher's voice. "We go way back. I used to teach you at a high school in P.E. and I want to know how your physical education is progressing."

Ross giggled and got on camera with Jackman for an adorable reunion.

"Yes, I used to teach you at Uppingham School in Rutland," said Jackman.

Unfortunately for Ross, the journalist seemed to lose composure with Jackman after his former teacher remembered him.

He tried to continue the interview, asking, "What makes you angry?" to which Jackman answered, "Students who don't really listen. The kind of students who don't bring their kit or jump in the pool when I tell them to jump in — that's what makes me angry, Rollo."

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Taking Anderson from screen to page

'Just a guy'. Matt Zoller Seitz's The Wes Anderson collection examines the director

MATT PRIGGE
Metro World News in New York City

Matt Zoller Seitz has known Wes Anderson since the director embarked on his first feature. CONTRIBUTED

The critic, writer and filmmaker Matt Zoller Seitz first met director Wes Anderson when he was still shopping around the short film that would birth his first feature, 1996's Bottle Rocket.

Seitz has been writing and analyzing his work since, even making a series of short videos on his films, The Substance of Style.

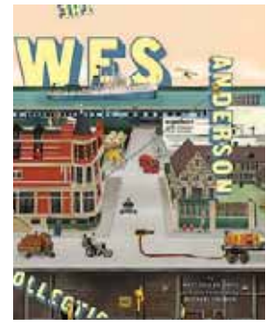
With The Wes Anderson Collection, Seitz puts his thoughts in a book, via a giant, lavish tome that also includes stills from Anderson's films, never-seen photos and a revealing and book-long interview with the director.

When did you decide this should be an interview book?

I like interviewing people. I like writing profiles of people. And the fact that I've known this guy for so long made an interview component more tempting. It took awhile to convince him. He's very out front as an auteur and an impresario. But that's not Wes. That's "Wes." The actual Wes is not this flamboyant, confident, cool Mr. Fox-type figure. He's just a guy. I'm not close to him, really, but I did know him when he was just a guy. When I talk to him I can still see just the guy. The guy is a Texas kid who is a little uncomfortable with being the centre of attention for too long and having people pay him compliments. Obviously he's an artist, so he likes being paid attention to and he likes acclaim. But I think he just wants the work to be seen and absorbed.

One of the curious trends in this book is how you often rattle off theories and analyses of his films, and at the end he just goes, "Hmm."

It's like he's taking it in. There are parts where he finds them



valid, but doesn't want to go so far as to validate them.

He's very modest.

If you read between the lines of this book, you can get a pretty clear picture of the real Wes. He's not an Oliver Stone or Quentin Tarantino, where when you read an interview with them you feel they're right there and completely transparent. I don't know if that's accurate — those might be performances as well. But with Wes he doesn't even give you that.

Anderson has many detractors. What do you think about them?

I feel like whatever you feel about Wes is whatever you feel about Wes. There's a point in the book where I floated one of my cockamamie theories, and I asked if he thought that was a valid interpretation. He said yes, it's a valid interpretation because it's your interpretation. You could see that as a noncommittal answer, or you could see it as a very sensible answer. I don't think you could say something against or for Wes Anderson that I think is unfair.

Well, some people do hold too much onto the charge of anal-retentiveness.

I feel like Wes is making movies about emotionally arrested or childlike people, and they are about the condition of being anal-retentive or controlling or fussy. But I don't think the movies are immature or that the movies are fussy. I think he's working through something by making these movies. And he never quite gets there.

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Lower Yonge Precinct Planning

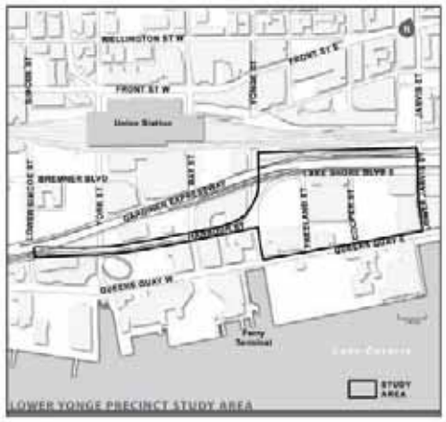
NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING #2

Waterfront Toronto and the City of Toronto are jointly undertaking two studies in the Lower Yonge Precinct Area: an Urban Design Guidelines study and a Transportation Master Plan Environmental Assessment (EA). When complete, the studies will be used to develop the planning framework needed to guide the future development of the Lower Yonge Precinct Area.

The project team has been developing a set of draft urban design guidelines for the precinct area. These guidelines describe the organization of streets, blocks, parks and publicly accessible open spaces and set out expectations for future buildings including layout and the range of permissible heights. Alternative transportation networks have also been developed and analyzed in accordance with the requirements of the Municipal Class EA, which is an approved planning process under the *Environmental Assessment Act*.

Meeting Details

Your input is an important part of the process. We invite you to attend the second of three public forums in which we will present both the draft urban design guidelines and the alternative transportation networks that support the future development of the Lower Yonge Precinct. You will be able to ask questions, offer input and submit comments.



LOWER YONGE PRECINCT STUDY AREA

Date Thursday, September 19, 2013
Time: 6:30 to 9 p.m.
Location: Metro Hall (Room 308/309), 55 John Street
TTC: St. Andrew Station
504 King (to John Street)
Parking: Car Park 52 – 40 York Street

Learn more at www.waterfrontoronto.ca/loweryonge and www.toronto.ca/planning/loweryongeprecinct.
To be added to the project mailing list, please contact:

Andrea Kelemen, Waterfront Toronto
20 Bay Street, Suite 1310, Toronto, ON M5J 2N8
Tel: 416-214-1344 ext. 248 Fax: 416-214-4591
Email: info@waterfrontoronto.ca
Website: www.waterfrontoronto.ca

During the Municipal Class EA and planning process, Waterfront Toronto and the City of Toronto will be collecting comments and information regarding this project from the public under the authority of the City of Toronto Act, 2006, s. 136(c) and the Planning Act, 1990. Personal information collected will be maintained in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act and may be used to provide updates on this file. Questions about the collection of this information can be directed to the City Planning Division, City of Toronto.

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METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

Why Tom Hanks can't get down to fighting weight

MELINDA TAUB
Metro World News

Tom Hanks ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Get back, cookies. You leave our Tom Hanks alone.

The beloved star, whose film Captain Phillips comes out this week, revealed last night on the Late Show that he has Type 2 diabetes. "I went to the doctor and she said, 'You know those high blood-sugar numbers you've been dealing with since you were 36? Well, you've graduated,'" he said to David Letterman. "'You've got Type 2 diabetes, young man.'"

Hanks said his doctor did offer him an escape strategy. "She said, 'Look, if you can weigh as much as you did in high school, you will essentially be completely healthy, you will not have Type 2 diabetes.' And I said to her, 'Well, I'm going to have Type 2 diabetes.' Because there is no way I can weigh as much as I did in high school."

Come on. Tom looks like he's already in pretty good shape. He can make it. How much did he weigh in high school? "I weighed 96 pounds in high school," he claims. "And most of that was that big, wide afro."

OK. Maybe just try to ride that Type 2 wave, then.

Miley Cyrus

If Miley wants Liam back, she'd better make nice with the sister-in-law

Apparently another woman played a major role in the break-up of Miley Cyrus and Liam Hemsworth, but it wasn't another girlfriend. According to Radar Online, Hemsworth's sister-in-law, Elsa Pataky, "is no fan of Miley" and urged him to break off their engagement.

"Elsa is totally against Miley and Liam getting back together. She spent the last year freezing Miley out in some kind of passive-aggressive move," a source says.

"Miley desperately wants to get back with Liam and believes she can because she's done it before. But to do that, she's going to have to win over Elsa."

Kate's kid dreams of a neon-green wedding

Kate Hudson and fiancé Matt Bellamy have been engaged for more than two years but have yet to set a wedding date — which is apparently a problem for Hudson's older son, nine-year-old Ryder, who has been applying "a little bit" of pressure on the actress to walk down the aisle.

"I think he looks forward to more the party than the actual idea of us getting married. He apparently wants to wear a neon green tux," Hudson tells Ellen DeGeneres during an interview. "He loves neon green. He wants to wear neon green with black. That's pretty cool. He's a bit of a fashion boy."

Kate Hudson

Headed to Mexico this winter? Want to go surfing? Hidden away on the Pacific Coast, the town of Puerto Escondido is generating buzz thanks to a starring role in HGTV's season premiere of Live Here, Buy This! The draw? The Mexican Pipeline, an unforgiving wave that attracts an international surfing crowd. Travel writer Michele Peterson created an app offering an insider's guide to Mexico's Surf City. Here are a few excerpts.

5 Hot spots in Puerto Escondido

Cafes & quick bites: Osa Mariposa

This hip hostel, just two blocks from the beach, appeals to backpackers and surfers. Choose from private bungalows or shared dormitories (four to a room). The clean and spacious bathrooms are superior to many others in this price range. The on-site restaurant offers a menu of tasty veggie and vegan options. Don't miss the black bean veggie burgers. Mescal and tequila figure highly at the bar. The website has a helpful map. You'll need it to find the place: osamariposa.com.

Lodging: Aqua Luna Hotel

This sleek, minimalist boutique hotel owned by an Aussie long boarder and his Mexican wife, offers a sophisticated escape in 16 rooms at wallet-friendly prices ranging from $25-$70 per night or $700 monthly for kitchenette rooms. The pearl-white walls, violet-hued swimming pool and adults-only policy creates a sensual Miami SoBe retreat, conveniently perched above Zicatela, the hippest beach with the most wave action. hotelaqualuna.com.

Adventure/culture: Oasis Surf and Language School

Even your pre-schooler can take Spanish classes at this professional language school located in the Rinconada neighbourhood. The school offers beginner, intermediate and advanced classes as well as specialized medical Spanish for health-care professionals. A full slate of cultural activities is available, including a learn-to-surf program. The school can also arrange volunteer experiences if you'd like to give back to the community and practise your new lingo at the same time. Visit oasislanguageschool.com. A five-day week of one-and-a-half-hour language classes costs about $75 US. Surfing classes cost around $35 US per class, with discounts on packages.

Natural attractions: Zicatela Beach

The main strip flanking Calle del Morro is packed with surf shops, restaurants, cafés, hotels and booming nightclubs. If you long to feel the sand between your toes, the wide beach is dotted with loungers, Bali beds and hammocks — all free to use with the purchase of a consumo (drink or snack). This is where the epic Mexican Pipeline wave breaks, so the main draw is surfing, but you can also take yoga classes, have a massage or book an excursion all within a few block radius. Strong surf and undertow makes this beach dangerous for swimmers. The red flag is always flying but depending on the tides, it's possible to find a shallow tidal pool and splash about like a duckling.

Bars & drink: Casa Babylon

Bookstore by day, nightclub by night. This unusual combination of bookstore/coffee shop and nightclub is weird enough to work. An eclectic decor of Mexican masks, Asian statues and rough-hewn furniture morphs effectively from a quiet haven into a pulsing nightclub with techno music, reggae, funk and live bands. Exchange some books, play a board game or two and then come back to party.

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Cruising

A riverboat fantasy — come true

ON THE MOVE
Loren Christie
life@metronews.ca

River cruising is taking off around the world. ISTOCK

The exploding popularity of river cruising is hardly surprising.

The most endearing quality of a river cruise is the intimacy it offers. A standard ship has capacity for 150 to 200 guests versus an ocean liner, which typically has 1,000-plus guests onboard. This allows you to get to know your travelling companions and removes the annoyance of having to stand in long lines to embark, disembark or simply enjoy a meal. River cruising also provides easy access to the destinations. At most stops you can wander into town from the dock or hop a short coach ride to a city centre. The distances between stops are typically much shorter than a standard cruise, allowing for the possibility of one to two stops per day and never having to spend a long day at sea. Although the most popular routes are in Europe, there are sailings available in countries as diverse as China, Russia and Vietnam.

There are various companies in the market, all trying to differentiate themselves with different offerings. At the top end is Scenic Tours. They appear to be on the pricey end but bear in mind they are the only true all-inclusive river cruise company. They include everything in their prices from alcohol, to guided tours and special experiences, such as a private concert of Mozart and Strauss' music in Vienna's Palais Liechtenstein. The other big players are Uniworld, AMA, Viking and Avalon. Emerald Waterways is the latest company to ply the rivers. It is a four-star product with fewer services and a lower price point, all aimed at attracting a younger demographic.

The Walking Dead bring life to tiny town

Grateful Grantville.
Visitors flocking to town to see spooky sets from season three

When the cotton mill closed, the rural Georgia town of Grantville began a slow transformation into a ghost town. Residents fled. Storefronts faded. Buildings decayed.

Over the decades, time turned the remains of the town into something almost post-apocalyptic, the perfect modern-day set for humans and "walkers" to attack one another. That's how the hugely popular TV show The Walking Dead ended up coming to town and bringing new life to Grantville.

Several key scenes in one episode from the AMC series were filmed on and near a one-block stretch of antique buildings on Grantville's Main Street.

The series' fourth season premieres on Oct. 13. Crews have been filming the new episodes in Georgia, but they keep locations of future episodes closely guarded secrets until the shows air.

In Grantville, the town's ruins were featured prominently last season. Bodies of walkers slain on the show were buried in a vacant lot beneath the brick archway remaining from a cotton mill building. Gunshots were fired from a nearby rooftop.

And child actor Chandler Riggs, who plays Carl Grimes on the show, entertained himself between scenes by placing pennies on the railroad tracks, the coins soon smashed into souvenirs by passing freight trains.

Now, every Saturday, visitors from around the country and the world turn off Interstate 85 and onto a two-lane highway that leads to the tiny town 80 kilometres southwest of Atlanta.

Draw of the Dead

Other productions have taken place in Grantville, but none have drawn the visitors like The Walking Dead. "Nobody came after they filmed Lawless and Broken Bridges here," says Mayor Jim Sells. "But once this episode aired from The Walking Dead, people started showing up from all over."

Since last summer, more than 3,600 visitors have taken a free tour led by Grantville Mayor Jim Sells, who explains where each scene from the Clear episode — during which the character Morgan makes it his mission to "clear" walkers by killing them — was filmed.

Visitors have come from as far as Australia, Singapore and Brazil, rejuvenating the town through tourism.

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Butternut Squash soup gets Thai twist

This recipe serves six. MATTHEW MEAD/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

1. In a stock or large soup pot over medium-low, heat the oil. Add the onions, garlic and salt and cook until the onions have softened, about 10 minutes. Stir in the ginger and curry paste and cook for a minute or two more. Add the squash and water and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer until the squash is tender, 15 to 20 minutes.

2. While the squash is cooking, zest and juice the lime. Add about a teaspoon of the zest and 1 tablespoon of the juice to the pot (reserving the extra). When the squash is tender, stir in the coconut milk.

3. Transfer soup to a blender or food processor, then purée until smooth. Be careful when blending hot liquids.

4. Return all of the soup to the pot and reheat. Taste and adjust the flavour as you wish with spoonful of sugar, if desired, as well as additional lime juice and/or curry paste. Stir in the spinach and cilantro and heat until just wilted.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS/ (RECIPE ADAPTED FROM THE MOOSEWOOD COLLECTIVE'S MOOSEWOOD RESTAURANT FAVOURITES, 2013, ST. MARTIN'S GRIFFIN)

Ingredients

- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 2 cups chopped yellow onions
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tbsp peeled and grated fresh ginger
- 1 tsp Thai red curry paste, or more to taste
- 2 1/2-lb butternut squash, peeled, seeded and chopped (about 6 cups)
- 3 cups water
- 1 lime
- 1 cup unsweetened coconut milk
- Sugar
- 2 cups baby spinach, cut into chiffonade
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro (optional)

Lunch. Spiced Squash

1. Cut squash in half crosswise and peel using a vegetable peeler. Remove seeds and chop squash to yield about 1.25 l (5 cups).

2. In a soup pot, heat oil over medium heat and cook onion and garlic for 3 minutes. Add squash, oregano, paprika and cinnamon and cook, stirring, for 2 minutes. Add broth and bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for about 25 minutes or until squash is very tender.

3. Using an immersion blender, purée soup until smooth. Alternatively, ladle into blender or food processor in batches and purée until smooth. Return to soup pot, stir in coriander and warm through. THE CANADIAN PRESS/ EMILY RICHARDS, PROFESSIONAL HOME ECONOMIST

Ingredients

- 1 small butternut squash (about 1 kg/2 lb)
- 15 ml (1 tbsp) canola oil
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 10 ml (2 tsp) dried oregano leaves
- 5 ml (1 tsp) paprika
- 1 ml (1/4 tsp) ground cinnamon
- 1.25 l (5 cups) vegetable broth
- 30 ml (2 tbsp) chopped fresh coriander

Drink of the Week

Thyme Gimlet

- 2 oz Belvedere vodka
- 3/4 oz thyme syrup*
- 3/4 oz lemon juice

Shake with cubed ice and strain over ice into a rocks glass. Garnish with lemon and thyme sprig.

***Thyme Syrup**

- 7-8 sprigs of fresh thyme
- 480 ml (16 oz) water
- 480 ml (16 oz) white sugar

Simmer thyme in the water for approximately 10 to 15 minutes or until you see the thyme go brown. Remove thyme and add sugar. Stir until dissolved. Cool and funnel into a glass bottle. Keep refrigerated.

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METROLINX

Who's turning up at the interview table?

Interrogation differentiation.

Five types of tough interviewers and how to handle each

MEGHAN GREAVES
TalentEgg.ca

Don't let this trio of tough talkers intimidate you. Keeping calm and carrying on will show them you're ready to cruise into this career. ISTOCK

Walking into an interview is not the most relaxing activity out there.

This is partly because interviews come with many unknowns.

What questions will an interviewer ask? What skills should you focus on? How long will the interview be?

One of the biggest unknowns when going into an interview is: what will the interviewer be like?

An interviewer's personality can be a hard thing to predict until you actually come face to face in the interview. To help you be savvy to the types of interviewers you might face as a student or new grad on the job hunt, here are a few dominant interviewer personality types and how to adjust successfully to them on the spot.

Rambling

A rambler is an interviewer who is chatty, friendly and outgoing.

Though this behaviour may be a relief when you first start the interview, try not to let your guard down too much.

In order to ensure that you're able to communicate the information that matters (skills, experience and so on), you'll need to single out the relevant aspects of the discussion and answer each question concisely and skillfully.

Shy

Usually it's the interviewee who feels shy, but interviewers can be a ball of nerves as well.

If you encounter a shy interviewer, the main thing is to understand that this is just their personality — not that you're performing poorly. Shy interviewers can be hard to read, difficult to create a conversation with and may wrap up the entire thing quickly.

The smart thing to do in this situation is to pick up on their personality type right away so you don't panic. To ease the atmosphere, try to be friendly, put them at ease and end in a positive way with a handshake.

Harsh

The great thing about this type of interviewer personality is that you'll recognize it the moment you walk in the door, which gives you more time to adjust successfully.

With questions being fired rapidly, an edgy tone and intimidating body language it can be easy to unravel on the spot. The key to magnificently performing with a harsh interviewer is to keep your composure. Take your time to answer each question, speak in a calm and paced manner and minimize small talk.

Inexperienced

Shaky hands, questions that don't flow together, quick exits and awkward conversations are all signs of an inexperienced or unprepared interviewer.

As the interviewee this can be surprising, but the key to having a stellar interview with an inexperienced interviewer is not being thrown off track. With this type of interviewer you need to be sure that even though they might not be addressing questions that allow you to showcase your information, you do it yourself.

Keep to your key points of discussion, relate them back to the position at hand in plain language and treat the interviewer professionally in order to keep things on track.

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And last but not least...

Nosy interviewers tend to unintentionally stray away from work-related questions during an interview.

- They may be trying to get you to reveal a little too much about your personality and life outside of work, or they may just be naturally inquisitive. In either case, you have to bring them back to the focus of the interview: you.
- You can usually figure out that you're being interviewed by a nosy interviewer within the first few minutes of the interview.
- Avoid being drawn into answering personal questions with noncommittal or brief answers and a polite return to the topic at hand.

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Diversity at the front desk

All employees are created equal. What do you know about Positive Spaces in the work place?

ROSIE HALES
TalentEgg.ca

Whether you identify with the LGBTQ community or not, human rights are universal. Working for an employer that has a reputation for respecting its employees would be a plus for anyone. ISTOCK

How much do you know about Positive Spaces? Would it affect your decision to apply for or work at a company if the firm didn't self-identify as a Positive Space?

A Positive Space is a space where sexual and gender diversity is supported and valued, thus creating a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere.

You've probably seen Positive Space symbols (an inverted triangle with rainbow colouring) without even realizing — they're all around, and their presence is growing. These symbols show that the space is somewhere that a member of the LGBTQ community can turn to for support, resources and referrals to other informational services.

Positive Spaces are currently not nationally governed and they aren't developed based on universal criteria, so an organization's classification as a Positive Space is based solely on self-identification.

Erin Ewing is the project coordinator at the Positive Spaces Initiative (PSI), a project started in 2008 by the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants to support LGBTQ newcomers to Canada.

While there's more to it than a quick list, Ewing identified three top reasons why employers should self-identify as Positive Spaces and commit to creating the atmosphere and attitude invoked by the designation.

You'll be working in a welcoming environment

Ewing suggested asking yourself these questions: "Do I want to feel safe, included, and welcome, and to be able to access services with dignity and respect? Do I want to be able to go to work without having to hide part of who I am, or live in fear and shame?"

If you answered yes to any of these questions, it seems obvious that you'll want to look for an employer that supports who you are.

A Positive Space employer is equipped with the necessary resources

"If a job requires relocation, then it is important to note that sometimes a person's gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation can affect what kinds of services they need. For example, finding housing in a neighbourhood where they will not be beat up or evicted for being gay, or finding a doctor who understands the medical issues around transitioning to a different sex," Ewing said.

A workplace that doesn't accept the LGBTQ community can be an unproductive one

"If you're being harassed and bullied at work, hear homo/bi/transphobic insults all day, or expending a lot of energy trying to hide your partner's gender or your family structure from casual enquiries, how productive can you really be?" Ewing said.

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Avs and have-nots: Leafs fall to Colorado

NHL. Undermanned Buds drop first of season against up-and-comers from Denver

P.A. Parenteau scored early in the third period to help the Colorado Avalanche edge the Toronto Maple Leafs 2-1 in a battle of unbeaten NHL teams Tuesday night.

Tied 1-1 going into the third, Colorado went ahead at 2:30 on a two-on-one with Jamie McGinn setting up Parenteau, who may not have known too much about it as the puck deflected in off his skate past a sliding defenceman Jake Gardiner.

Avs rookie Nathan MacKinnon, the 18-year-old first-overall pick in the 2013 draft, got an assist — his fourth of the young season — on Parenteau's third goal of the season. Cory Sarich also scored for Colorado (3-0-0), which got another terrific start from Semyon Varlamov in net.

Joffrey Lupul scored for a depleted Toronto (3-1-0), which charged hard during a power play midway through the third period but was unable to score.

On Tuesday

Avalanche	Leafs
2	1

Jay McClement's absence due to his wife going into labour further stripped a Leaf lineup already missing Mark Fraser, Nikolai Kulemin and Frazer McLaren through injury and David Clarkson due to suspension.

Toronto seemed off its game, reflected perhaps at the morning skate when coach Randy Carlyle huddled his troops early in a bid to focus them on the task that lay ahead.

Colorado, playing an exciting, up-tempo brand of hockey under head coach Patrick Roy, outshot Toronto 33-28.

The game, which started as a goaltending display before 19,388 at the Air Canada Centre, was the first between the two teams since October 2011 and offered Toronto fans a first NHL look at MacKinnon.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Avalanche forward Gabriel Landeskog, left, takes a hit from Leafs blue-liner Jake Gardiner during the Leafs' 2-1 loss to Colorado on Tuesday.

NATHAN DENETTE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Nathan MacKinnon

NHL living up to top pick's expectations

Nathan MacKinnon is clearly enjoying his rookie season ride.

The 18-year-old centre from Cole Harbour, N.S., was all smiles Tuesday as the media descended on his stall in the visitors' dressing room at Air Canada Centre.

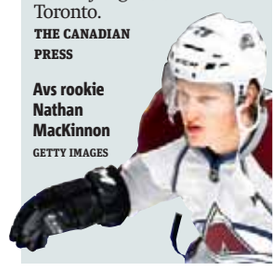
Asked what has surprised him about the NHL, the Colorado rookie replied: "I guess how good they treat us here.

"It's awesome. I'm loving every second of it. The travelling with the team, the way that they treat the players is pretty special. Obviously a little different than junior but I can't complain about that either, it's been great."

MacKinnon's parents flew out for the Toronto game.

The top overall pick in the 2013 draft has four assists in three games after Tuesday night's win in Toronto.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



Avs rookie Nathan MacKinnon

GETTY IMAGES

Tigers get by with help from fans

Tigers DH Victor Martinez points skyward after hitting a solo home run on Tuesday night in Detroit. GETTY IMAGES

Max Scherzer escaped a major jam in relief and the Detroit Tigers — helped by two fans who reached out to try to reel in Victor Martinez's disputed home run — rallied past the Oakland Athletics 8-6 on Tuesday to force a decisive fifth game in their AL division series.

Playing catch-up most of the way, the Tigers tied it first with Jhonny Peralta's three-run homer in the fifth inning and then on Martinez's solo shot in the seventh. A couple of fans attempted to catch Martinez's drive, and at least one of them bobbled the ball as he reached over the railing above the wall — preventing right fielder Josh Reddick from having any chance at a leaping grab.

Reddick and centre-fielder Coco Crisp immediately protested, pointing up at the stands in the hope of a fan-interference call. But umpires upheld the homer after a replay review.

Scherzer, making his first relief appearance since the 2011 playoffs, had already given up a run in the seventh. With the Tigers ahead 5-4, he allowed a walk and a double to start the eighth, but after an intentional walk to load the bases, manager Jim Leyland left his 21-game winner on the mound.

Scherzer struck out Reddick and Stephen Vogt before getting pinch-hitter Alberto Callaspo to line out to centre.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MLB

"The last three years of not getting to go really taught me to embrace this opportunity."

Dodgers ace Clayton Kershaw, who started on three days' rest Monday in L.A.'s 4-3 NLDS series-clinching win over Atlanta.

Sandusky scandal

Penn State settles with abuse victims

At least 19 young men have settled with Penn State over assertions of abuse by former assistant football coach Jerry Sandusky, according to lawyers for the claimants.

Many, if not all of them, have received cheques from the university, the attorneys said over the past two days. The school has set aside some $60 million to pay claims, though several lawyers say the settlements prevent them from disclosing details, including the amounts their clients were paid.

Sandusky, 69, the school's longtime assistant football coach under Joe Paterno, is serving 30 to 60 years in prison for sexually abusing 10 boys over 15 years.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hockey

Harper: Authorities have been letting fighting slide

Stephen Harper has dropped his prime ministerial gloves and put on his hockey historian's helmet to wade in on the subject of violence in Canada's most popular sport.

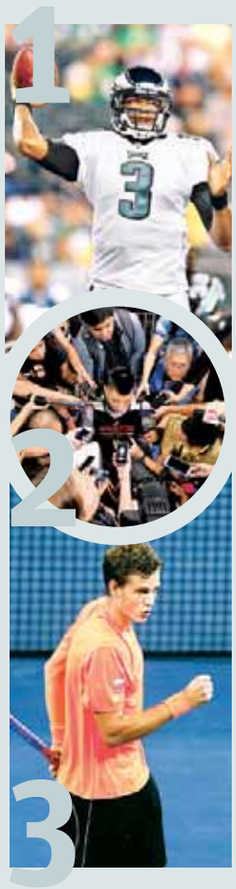
And he did so from a beach-front hotel in Bali, Indonesia, of all places.

Harper, who has a book out next month on the early history of pro hockey, said it's a rough sport but he's an admirer of skill over brawn.

"I do think that authorities have historically not taken their responsibility to try and keep the rough, tough part of the game within the rules," Harper said, adding he's concerned about head shots.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Sports in pictures



1 **NFL.** Bills stock another quarterback

The Buffalo Bills added insurance to their raw, injury-depleted depth at quarterback by signing free agent Dennis Dixon to their practice squad on Tuesday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

2 **NBA.** Media Lin your face

Linsanity is gripping the Philippines.

Jeremy Lin, the NBA's first American-born player of Taiwanese descent, stole the spotlight Tuesday as the Houston Rockets practised for the first NBA pre-season game in the basketball-obsessed country. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

3 **ATP.** Pospisil pulls upset

Richard Gasquet was dealt a setback to his chances of qualifying for the elite ATP Finals after a first-round loss to Canada's Vasek Pospisil 6-3, 6-4 in the Shanghai Masters on Tuesday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

D.J. starting from scratch with Raps

NBA. Ninth overall pick in 2008 draft settling into backup point guard role with his third team

There aren't too many teams that can boast having two point guards who have been starters in the NBA.

The Toronto Raptors will have that luxury this season.

D.J. Augustin, a former starter with the Charlotte Bobcats, gives the Raptors some much-needed depth as they try to improve on their 34-48 record from last season.

"D.J. has a very steadying effect and he's an excellent floor general," Raptors coach Dwane Casey said.

Augustin, a New Orleans native whose family was forced to relocate to Houston by Hurricane Katrina, was a McDonald's All-American in high school. He appeared on the cover of Sports Illustrated as a star guard at the University of Texas, and went on to be selected ninth overall by Charlotte in the 2008 NBA draft.

However, he seemed to have lost his confidence last season, recording career lows in scoring and field goal percentage and starting just five games as a backup in Indiana.

He's looking for a fresh start in Toronto.

Quoted

"Whatever coach needs me to, whatever the team needs me to do. This is all about opportunity and I think here, I'm getting a chance."

Raptors point guard D.J. Augustin

"It's just about getting an opportunity, getting a chance," he said. "Here I'm getting a chance to play, and I'm just trying to get comfortable and keep playing well."

Augustin was impressive in the Raptors' intrasquad game last weekend in Halifax, leading the black team in a win over the grey squad that was led by starting point guard Kyle Lowry.

Augustin, who played almost 30 minutes, was the straw that stirred the drink for the black team. He notched five points, but doled out seven assists and did a great job distributing the ball, consistently finding DeMar DeRozan and Jonas Valanciunas in the paint.

"The more we practise, the more I get comfortable, the more confident I am and my teammates are confident in me, so that helps me out," said Augustin.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

New Raptors point guard D.J. Augustin spent last season playing for the Pacers. GETTY IMAGES FILE

MLS. Frei to get another shot in goal with Bendik serving suspension

Former starting goalie Stefan Frei may finally get his chance to play next week for Toronto FC in place of the suspended Joe Bendik.

Frei has not started an MLS game since Sept. 24, 2011, when Toronto was beaten 3-0 by Chivas USA.

The 27-year-old Swiss-born keeper missed all of last season with an ankle and leg injury suffered in training. Then, having endured a long recuperation, he lost his job to Bendik after breaking his nose in the first game of the 2013 pre-season.

Bendik, a fiery and dependable shot-stopper, has been one of the bright lights in Toronto's 5-16-11 season. But he received a second yellow card at the end of Toronto's 1-0 loss to Philadelphia last Saturday and will have to sit out a game in Chicago on Oct. 19.

Toronto has a bye this weekend.

Bendik was yellow-carded in the 86th minute for time-wasting as he prepared a goal kick. After the game ended, he got another yellow when he went to talk to the referee.

Philadelphia scored on a 95th-minute free kick by Brazil's Kleberson to win 1-0.

"That was a weird one, I don't understand that," manager Ryan Nelsen said Tuesday of the ejection.

"Mind-boggling how he got the first (card). And then I think the second (card) was more that he was asking about how it took them (Philadelphia) two minutes to celebrate the goal and then he (referee Armando Villarreal) called the game before the six minutes (stoppage time) was up."

Toronto wraps up its season Oct. 26 at home to the Montreal Impact. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Joe Bendik. THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

NHL

EASTERN CONFERENCE

ATLANTIC DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Toronto	4	3	1	0	13	10	6
Boston	2	2	0	0	7	2	4
Tampa Bay	3	2	1	0	7	7	4
Detroit	3	2	1	0	6	7	4
Ottawa	2	1	0	1	5	5	3
Montreal	2	1	1	0	7	5	2
Florida	3	1	2	0	5	11	2
Buffalo	4	0	3	1	4	10	1

METROPOLITAN DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Pittsburgh	3	3	0	0	12	3	6
N.Y. Islanders	3	2	0	1	12	7	5
Carolina	3	1	1	1	6	9	3
Columbus	2	1	1	0	6	6	2
N.Y. Rangers	2	1	1	0	4	5	2
Washington	3	1	2	0	10	12	2
New Jersey	3	0	1	2	7	12	2
Philadelphia	4	1	3	0	5	10	2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

CENTRAL DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
Colorado	3	3	0	0	11	3	6
St. Louis	2	2	0	0	11	2	4
Winnipeg	3	2	1	0	12	10	4
Chicago	2	1	0	1	8	7	3
Dallas	2	1	1	0	4	5	2
Minnesota	2	0	0	2	5	7	2
Nashville	2	0	2	0	3	7	0

PACIFIC DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OL	GF	GA	Pt
San Jose	2	2	0	0	8	2	4
Vancouver	3	2	1	0	12	10	4
Anaheim	3	2	1	0	8	11	4
Calgary	3	1	0	2	12	13	4
Los Angeles	3	1	2	0	7	10	2
Edmonton	3	1	2	0	11	15	2
Phoenix	3	1	2	0	6	11	2

Note: Two points for a win, one point for an overtime/shootout loss.

Tuesday's results
Colorado 2 Toronto 1
N.Y. Islanders 6 Phoenix 1
Philadelphia 2 Florida 1
Pittsburgh 5 Carolina 2
Tampa Bay 3 Buffalo 2 (OT)
Minnesota at Nashville
New Jersey at Vancouver
NY Rangers at San Jose

Monday's results
Edmonton 5 New Jersey 4 (SO)
N.Y. Rangers 3 Los Angeles 1

Wednesday's games — All Times Eastern
Montreal at Calgary, 8 p.m.
Chicago at St. Louis, 8 p.m.
Ottawa at Los Angeles, 10:30 p.m.

MLB PLAYOFFS

A.L. DIVISION SERIES

(Best-of-5; x — played only if necessary)

BOSTON (1) VS. TAMPA BAY (6)

(Boston leads series 2-1)

Tuesday's result
Boston at Tampa Bay

Monday's result
Tampa Bay 5 Boston 4

Thursday's game
x-Tampa Bay (Moore 17-4) at Boston (Lester 15-8), 5:37 p.m.

OAKLAND (2) VS. DETROIT (3)

(Series tied 2-2)

Tuesday's result
Detroit 8 Oakland 6

Monday's result
Oakland 6 Detroit 3

Thursday's game
Detroit (Scherzer 21-3) at Oakland (Colon 18-6), 9:07 p.m.

N.L. DIVISION SERIES

ST. LOUIS (1) VS. PITTSBURGH (4)

(Series tied 2-2)

Monday's result
St. Louis 2 Pittsburgh 1

Wednesday's game
Pittsburgh (Burnett 10-11) at St. Louis (Wainwright 19-9), 5:07 p.m.

ATLANTA (2) VS. L.A. DODGERS (3)

(Los Angeles Dodgers wins series 3-1)

Monday's result
Los Angeles Dodgers 4 Atlanta 3

CFL

WEEK 16

EAST

	GP	W	L	T	PF	PA	Pt
x-Toronto	14	9	5	0	407	370	18
x-Hamilton	14	7	7	0	360	383	14
Montreal	14	6	8	0	349	385	12
Winnipeg	14	2	12	0	279	459	4

WEST

	GP	W	L	T	PF	PA	Pt
x-Calgary	14	11	3	0	446	323	22
x-Saskatchewan	14	9	5	0	419	316	18
x-B.C.	14	9	5	0	395	350	18
Edmonton	14	3	11	0	340	409	6

x — clinched playoff berth.

Friday's game — All Times Eastern
B.C. at Calgary, 9 p.m.

Saturday's game
Edmonton at Saskatchewan, 4:30 p.m.

Monday, Oct. 14
Winnipeg at Montreal, 1 p.m.
Toronto vs. Hamilton (at Guelph), 4:30 p.m.

NFL

WEEK SIX

Thursday's game — All Times Eastern
N.Y. Giants at Chicago, 8:25 p.m.

Sunday's games
Detroit at Cleveland, 1 p.m.
Green Bay at Baltimore, 1 p.m.
St. Louis at Houston, 1 p.m.
Cincinnati at Buffalo, 1 p.m.
Pittsburgh at N.Y. Jets, 1 p.m.
Philadelphia at Tampa Bay, 1 p.m.
Carolina at Minnesota, 1 p.m.
Oakland at Kansas City, 1 p.m.
Tennessee at Seattle, 4:05 p.m.
Jacksonville at Denver, 4:05 p.m.
New Orleans at New England, 4:25 p.m.
Arizona at San Francisco, 4:25 p.m.
Washington at Dallas, 8:30 p.m.

Monday, Oct. 14
Indianapolis at San Diego, 8:40 p.m.

MLS

Wednesday's games — All Times Eastern
Kansas City at Houston, 8:30 p.m.
Vancouver at Seattle, 10 p.m.
Colorado at San Jose, 10:30 p.m.

Saturday's games
New England at Montreal, 2:30 p.m.
Philadelphia at D.C., 7 p.m.
Chicago at FC Dallas, 8:30 p.m.

Sunday's game — Seattle at Portland, 9 p.m.

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¤Based on 2013 EnerGuide highway fuel consumption estimates. Government of Canada test methods used. Your actual fuel consumption will vary based on powertrain, driving habits and other factors. See retailer for additional EnerGuide details. 2013 Dodge Journey 2.4 L with 4-speed automatic – Hwy: 7.7 L/100 km (37 MPG) and City: 11.2 L/100 km (25 MPG). 2013 Dodge Dart AERO – Hwy: 4.8 L/100 km (59 MPG) and City: 7.3 L/100 km (39 MPG). Wise customers read the fine print: €, ◊, •, *, ♦, †, § The All Out Clearout Event offers are limited time offers which apply to retail deliveries of selected new and unused models purchased from participating retailers on or after October 1, 2013. Offers subject to change and may be extended without notice. All pricing includes freight ($1,595 – $1,695), air tax (if applicable), tire levy and OMVIC fee. Pricing excludes licence, insurance, registration, any retailer administration fees, other retailer charges and other applicable fees and taxes. Retailer order/trade may be necessary. Retailer may sell for less. €$5,625 in Total Discounts are available on the new 2013 Dodge Journey R/T model and consist of $2,000 Consumer Cash Discount and $3,625 in Ultimate Journey Package Savings. See your retailer for complete details. ◊Ultimate Journey Package Discounts available at participating retailers on the purchase/lease of a new 2013 Dodge Journey R/T with Ultimate Journey Package (JCES49 28X with AGV, AV1, AS4, GWG). Discount consists of: $2,500 in Bonus Cash that will be deducted from the negotiated price after taxes; and (ii) $1,125 in no-cost options that will be deducted from the negotiated price before taxes. Some conditions apply. See your retailer for complete details. •$19,995 Purchase Price applies to the new 2013 Dodge Journey Canada Value Package (22F) only and includes $2,000 Consumer Cash Discount. $16,995 Purchase Price applies to the new 2013 Dodge Dart SE (25A) only. *Consumer Cash Discounts are offered on select 2013 vehicles and are deducted from the negotiated price before taxes. ♦4.99% lease financing of up to 60 months available on approved credit through WS Leasing Ltd. (a wholly owned subsidiary of Westminster Savings Credit Union) to qualified customers on applicable new 2012, 2013 and 2014 models at participating retailers in Ontario, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. Retailer order/trade may be necessary. Retailer may lease for less. See your retailer for complete details. Examples: 2013 Dodge Journey Canada Value Package (22F)/2013 Dodge Dart SE (25A) with a Purchase Price of $19,995/$16,575 leased at 4.99% over 60 months with $4,649/$2,779 down payment, equals 130 bi-weekly payments of $99/$99 with a cost of borrowing of $3,245.60/$2,808.40 and a total obligation of $14,589.90/$14,599. 22,000 kilometre/year allowance. Charge of $0.18 per excess kilometre. Some conditions apply. †0% purchase financing for up to 36 months available on new 2013 Jeep Compass, Patriot, Dodge Dart, FIAT 500 and 2014 FIAT 500L models to qualified customers on approved credit through Royal Bank of Canada, Scotiabank and TD Auto Finance. Retailer order/trade may be necessary. Retailer may sell for less. See your retailer for complete details. Example: 2013 Dodge Dart SE (25A) with a Purchase Price of $16,995, with a $0 down payment, financed at 0% for 36 months equals 78 bi-weekly payments of $217.88 with a cost of borrowing of $0 and a total obligation of $16,995. §2013 Dodge Journey R/T AWD shown. Price including applicable Consumer Cash Discount: $31,640. 2013 Dodge Dart GT shown. Price including applicable Consumer Cash Discount: $24,590. ^Based on 2013 *Ward's* Middle Cross Utility segmentation. ◊Based on U.S. market and vehicles under $18,000 US. For more information, visit www.kbb.com. Kelley Blue Book is a registered trademark of Kelley Blue Book Co., Inc. **Based on 2013 *Ward's* upper small sedan costing under $25,000. ❖Real Deals. Real Time. Use your mobile device to build and price any model. ®Jeep is a registered trademark of Chrysler Group LLC. ™The SiriusXM logo is a registered trademark of SiriusXM Satellite Radio Inc.

The 2013 Acura TL

Review. Acura's top sport sedan is looking great and getting old gracefully

JUSTIN PRITCHARD
drive@metronews.ca

The fourth-generation Acura TL launched for model-year 2009, and is due to be replaced any time by a new, fifth-generation machine. It's far from the freshest or newest model in its segment — but the current Acura TL is one of the most established.

That's thanks in no small part to its delivery of performance, technology and everyday sensibility alongside two things premium shoppers love: an honest price tag, and a promise of reliable, no-nonsense ownership thanks to Acura's gleaming reputation for reliability.

The gist? The TL is getting old these days, but it remains a staple product in its segment that's well-deserving of a test-drive. The looks might still be controversial, but the TL remains a great machine to drive, and a car special to the Acura brand. The current-generation TL put Super Handling All Wheel Drive (SH-AWD) technology into the mainstream luxury sedan market. And, though it was late to the game, it pushed Acura sedans past the 300-horsepower mark at long last.

All of this exists in a highly-usable package. There's generous room for four adults, plenty of at-hand storage, and a great looking, three-dimensional look to the instrument cluster, dashboard and controls. In all, you get unique styling that very much does its own thing while creating a distinctively upscale, techy atmosphere. Proper cupholders, deep door bins and a sense of always having a place for your stuff help round out the package.

Key competitors include the BMW 5-Series, Audi A6 and Infiniti G37. Though not pack-leading where output is concerned, the big V6 is very pleasing to listen to and really piles on the juice at high revs as the VTEC power-cam kicks in. The six-speed automatic works well with the engine for smoothness and response, supporting a sporty but very refined character.

The SH-AWD system, as noted on numerous other test-drives, has benefits which are two-fold. First, on slippery stuff, it finds surprising levels of traction — using sophisticated computer controls and fast-acting magnetic clutch packs to extract the most forward momentum from the ground beneath. Second, when drivers push the TL's limits a little, the system "overdrives" the inside rear wheel, which slightly slides the tail out and points the nose inwards in a sort of mini-drift. Translation? You get playful agility and locked-on confidence, depending on what your right foot is up to on the surface in question.

That's all directed by a heavyset steering system that confidently transmits a sense of agility and playfulness to the driver, too. End of the day, few sedans are this all-out confident and discreetly entertaining when pushed hard.

Powerful and fairly communicative brakes back up the performance capabilities — and when you're on a relaxing drive, wind and road noise levels are kept adequately in check, as is fuel consumption. This engine might not have all the latest fuel-saving gadgets, but I still averaged under 10 lites per 100 km over the course of a week.

Other notes? The xenon projector lights are fantastic, and the big doors and big comfy seats make this an easy car to get in and out of, even many times per day. Finally, blind-spot monitoring and a slew of fully-automatic or voice-commanded features on the "Elite" grade test model I drove added a sense of effortless relaxation on lengthy road trips.

Numerous competitors are more modern-looking, both inside and out. A comparable Audi or Lexus will boast a more striking cabin, and a comparable BMW or Mercedes will likely prove more all-out comfortable. The new TL has yet to be seen — but for the time being, shoppers after a car that's discreetly sporty, offers a proven reputation, delivers plenty of character and delivers a pleasing overall driving experience should add the current TL to their "to test drive" list.

ALL PHOTOS JUSTIN PRITCHARD

2013 Acura TL

- **Fuel economy.** 9.9L /100km
- **Engines (hp).** 3.7L V6, 305 horsepower, VTEC.
- **Transmissions.** Six-speed automatic
- **Base price (incl. destination)** (TL SH-AWD Elite) $49,450

Key strengths

This isn't a machine that begs for attention, but rather focuses on sensibility and a quiet, confident demeanor. And, though high-tech and sporty, the TL is easy to drive, easy to learn and requires nothing of the driver when they'd prefer to relax and enjoy a peaceful drive.

Key complaints

Simply, it's getting old. The navigation and infotainment read-outs are due for an overhaul, and so are many of the controls and interfaces on board. More power would help the TL earn the dollars of driving enthusiasts, and the lack of folding rear seats limits cargo carrying capacity.

Hey Mr. Car Man, let's make a deal

Driving force. Autumn is a great time to take advantage of dealers that need to sell their new cars, so enjoy the wiggle room on price

JIL MCINTOSH
drive@metronews.ca

Along with colourful leaves and crisp weather, fall also brings the latest vehicles into the showrooms. It's often a good time to buy a new car, as dealers clear out their inventory of last year's models to make way for the new ones.

"Manufacturers want those new cars in the hands of consumers," says Ben Spatafora, national director for CarCostCanada. That means not only can you expect to find deals on the outgoing model-year vehicles, but automakers may even be using incentives and discounts to get those incoming cars and trucks into consumers' driveways.

Almost all new-car dealerships are independently-owned franchises, and almost all purchase their inventory — those new cars, trucks and SUVs sitting on the lot — with a revolving line of credit, commonly known as a "floor plan."

Every day these vehicles sit unsold, they're racking up interest charges. And if the 2014 model isn't substantially changed from the 2013 version, and the MSRP (manufacturer's suggested retail price, the maximum the dealer can charge for the car) is close enough to that of the 2014, many buyers will choose the newer model year.

Clock's a tickin'

"The moment it hits the pavement, the clock starts to tick, and there's motivation for the seller to move it quicker rather than later."

Ben Spatafora, national director for CarCostCanada

The dealer doesn't want to get stuck with any unsold 2013 models, so you're in a good position to strike a deal on one.

While ordering a vehicle from the factory will allow you to get precisely the options and colour you want, you probably won't have as much opportunity to negotiate on the price, since it will only pass through the dealer's hands for delivery and licensing. You'll have a far better chance with one that's sitting in the dealer's inventory.

"All buyers will have some sort of 'wiggle room' on the price when the product is in stock," Spatafora says. "The moment it hits the pavement, the clock starts to tick, and there's motivation for the seller to move it quicker rather than later." Manufacturers' incentives on vehicles can include cash discounts, low- or zero-per cent interest rates on financing, or products such as winter tire packages, no-charge oil changes, or other maintenance services.

If you're thinking of replacing your vehicle because it's becoming unreliable or no longer suits your family's needs, Spatafora suggests planning ahead, instead of having to scramble when your old one gives out. "If you think you'll need a new car in the spring, then start to look now," he says. "If you can time it with big incentives, model changes, or end-of-year or seasonal sales, that's a bonus."

Take note potential buyers

- **Know your incentives.** Check the auto manufacturer's advertisements and websites before you go car shopping, so you know what incentives are being offered.
- **Know your payment method.** Vehicle incentives may be different if you're buying versus leasing, or paying cash versus financing, so be sure you know which one applies.

These signs look familiar? That's because it's fall again. CONTRIBUTED

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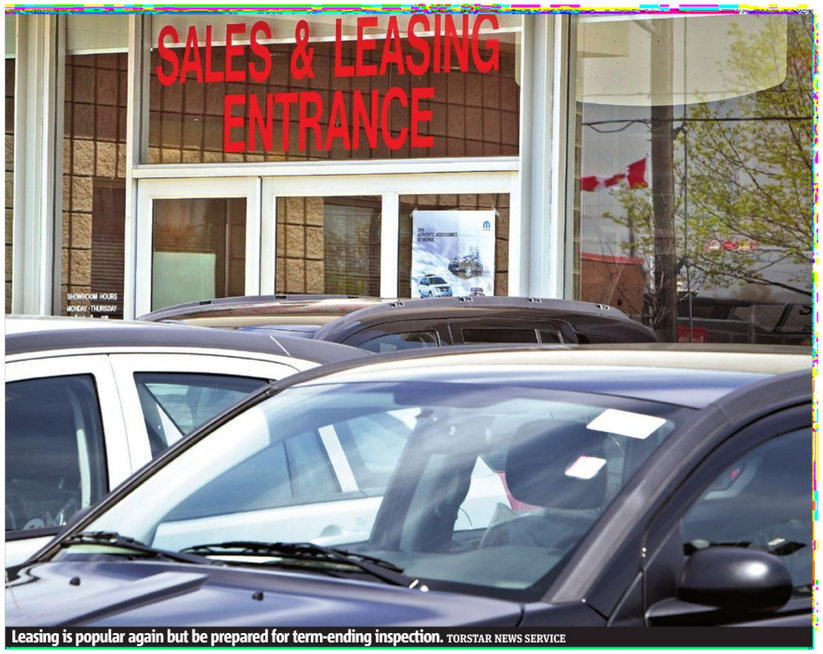

Leasing is popular again but be prepared for term-ending inspection. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Autopilot. Car rental is on the rise and properly regulated so here's some tips on mitigating your end-of-term wear and tear charges

AUTO PILOT
Mike Goetz
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More automakers are offering leasing as a finance option, and more consumers are taking up their offers.

We won't go into which option — loans or leasing — makes more sense for you, because that's an economic or accounting class, and I've sworn off school ever since that wardrobe malfunction at the blackboard back in Grade 7.

Instead, let's take a minute or two to talk about the lease-end vehicle inspection.

They've had a history of being acrimonious, but things are better now.

Big, nationwide third-party providers now perform the inspections, and have been extensively schooled to be consistent. The inspections are also now almost always done while the lessee still has the vehicle, so he or she can address issues and/or negotiate charges before the final bill is produced.

Honda Canada, for example, will send out a letter notifying you that an inspection company will be contacting you around 45 days prior to lease end. The parties then arrange a suitable date and location for the inspection, which takes about 30 to 40 minutes.

"Lessees will receive a paper copy of their inspection immediately," says William Hope, Manager-Lease Maturity Centre, Honda Canada Finance.

"The inspection lists all exceptions but not estimated cost. ... The lessee is provided a website and can view their inspection online within 48 hours, in which all estimated charges will have been completed."

If you think you can get the exceptions fixed cheaper than Honda, go ahead and knock yourself out.

Of course, you can bypass this whole exercise by purchasing an excess wear and tear protection plan. Depending on the value of the vehicle, these plans can run about $500 to $1,000. The Honda product is called Lease Guard Insurance.

Jim Mathews, president of LeaseBusters, thinks they are "terrific" and highly recommends them.

Not only do you not have to worry about extra charges, if you need to get out of the lease, and you engage a firm like LeaseBusters to find you a suitable person to take over the lease, your vehicle is instantly more desirable than all the other lease vehicles trying to find new homes.

If you don't have such a plan and you're facing your inspection soon, Mathews says to be particularly aware of the following:

Repair windshield chips. If there is something not up to grade about the windshield, the leasing company will typically charge you for a complete replacement. If a crack or chip can be repaired, get it repaired.

Measure tire tread depth. Have your dealership or independent technician professionally measure the tread depth on the tires, to determine if they will pass or fail the allowances for acceptable tire wear. If they don't, replace them with a matching used set that does. And remember to make sure they confirm to the OEM's requirements for speed and load ratings. If you do anything less, they could theoretically ding you for a complete new set.

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GT model shown
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Model Code D5XS53 AA00
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FROM. $3,000 OFF
ALL IN SALE PRICE $20,995 EXCLUDES HST
Model Code E6SD63 AA00
2013 MAZDA MX-5 GX
FROM. $5,000 OFF
Model Code L2X553 AA00
ALL IN SALE PRICE $26,050 EXCLUDES HST
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GT model shown
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ALL IN SALE PRICE $34,145 EXCLUDES HST
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*Finance offers are now available on new 2014 Versa Note 1.6 S (B5RG54 AA00), manual transmission/2013 Sentra 1.8 S (C4LG53 AA00), manual transmission. Selling Price is $13,699/$15,949 financed at 0.9%/0% APR equals 182 /182 bi-weekly payments of $78/$88 for an 84/84 month term. $0/$0 down payment required. Cost of borrowing is $441.36/$0 for a total obligation of $14,140/$15,949. $500/$1,250 NCF Finance Cash included in advertised price, applicable only on 2013 Sentra 1.8 S manual transmission (C4LG53 AA00/C4LG53 BK00)/Versa Note 1.6 S (B5RG54 AA00/B5RG14 AE00) on finance purchases through subvented loan contracts only through Nissan Canada Finance. This offer cannot be combined with any other offer. Conditions apply. †$4,000 cash discount is valid on the new 2013 Nissan Altima Sedan 2.5 (T4LG13 AA00/AA10) and 2013 Altima Sedan 2.5 S (T4RG13 AA00/AA10)/†13,000 cash discount is valid on all 2013 Titan models except the Titan 4X2 King Cab S SWB (1KAG73 AA00) when registered and delivered between October 1-31st, 2013. The cash discount is only available on the cash purchase, and will be deducted from the negotiated selling price before taxes and cannot be combined with special lease or finance rates. This offer cannot be combined with any other offer. Conditions apply. ‡$13,699/$21,527/$15,949 Selling price for a new 2014 Versa Note 1.6 S (B5RG54 AA00), manual transmission/2013 Altima Sedan 2.5 (T4LG13 AA00), CVT transmission/2013 Sentra 1.8 S (C4LG53 AA00), manual transmission. $500/$1,250 NCF Finance Cash included in advertised price, applicable only on 2013 Sentra 1.8 S manual transmission (C4LG53 AA00/C4LG53 BK00)/Versa Note 1.6 S (B5RG54 AA00/B5RG14 AE00) on finance purchases through subvented loan contracts only through Nissan Canada Finance. This offer cannot be combined with any other offer. Conditions apply. ♦Models shown $20,719/$34,427/$21,649 Selling Price for a new 2014 Versa Note 1.6 S SL (B5TG14 NA00), Xtronic CVT® transmission/2013 Altima Sedan 3.5 SL (T4SG13 AA00), CVT transmission/2013 Sentra 1.8 SR (C4RG13 RT00), CVT transmission. ♦**Freight and PDE charges ($1,567/$1,695/$1,567), air-conditioning levy ($100) where applicable, certain fees (ON: $5 OMVIC fee and $29 tire stewardship fee), manufacturer's rebate and dealer participation where applicable are included. License, registration, insurance and applicable taxes are extra. Finance and lease offers are available on approved credit through Nissan Canada Finance for a limited time, may change without notice and cannot be combined with any other offers except stackable trading dollars. Retailers are free to set individual prices. Offers valid between October 1-31st , 2013. ∞Fuel economy from competitive intermediate/compact 2013 internal combustion engine models sourced from Autodata on 13-12-2012. Hybrids and diesels excluded. 2013 Altima fuel economy tested by Nissan Motor Company Limited. Altima: 2.5L engine (7.4L/100 KM CITY/5.0L/100 KM HWY), 3.5L (9.3L/100 KM CITY/6.4L/100 KM HWY). 3.5L shown. Actual mileage will vary with driving conditions. Use for comparison purposes only. ∆Association of International Automobile Manufacturers of Canada (AIAMC) Entry Level Segmentation. MY14 Versa Note v. MY13/14 competitors. Offers subject to change, continuation or cancellation without notice. Offers have no cash alternative value. See your participating Nissan retailer for complete details. ©1998-2013 Nissan Canada Inc. and Nissan Canada Financial Services Inc. a division of Nissan Canada Inc.

TADA

Help stop distracted driving

THE WHEEL DEAL
Todd Bourgon, Executive Director, Trillium Automobile Dealers Association

In recent years, the Trillium Automobile Dealers Association (TADA) has become a strong advocate of the dangers of distracted driving. Our Association has formed strategic partnerships with media companies and police associations, and has communicated the message across multiple print and online platforms. Despite these efforts, driver distraction continues to be a deadly issue on our roads and highways. According to the Canadian Automobile Association, "80 per cent of collisions and 65 per cent of near crashes have some form of driver distraction as contributing factors."

A Data Abacus poll reported that 90 per cent of Canadians admitted to driving while distracted, and 89 per cent of Ontarians admitted to indulging in some form of unnecessary distraction while behind the wheel.

Texting at the wheel is lethal. ISTOCK

According to the Insurance Bureau of Canada, distracting drivers are just as impaired as someone with a blood alcohol content of 0.08, the baseline for impaired driving offences under the Criminal Code of Canada. The most common distraction for drivers is mobile phone use, either talking or texting without the aid of a hands-free device. Other 'distraction' activities include shaving, applying make-up, playing with stereo systems, reading newspapers and eating food

In 2009, the Ontario government banned the use of hand-held devices while driving, but the prospect of a small fine (and a possible increase in insurance premiums if someone is convicted of the offence) is not much of a deterrent. Part of the problem, I suspect, is that fines aren't large enough. In Ontario, fines range from $155 to $500, with no loss of demerit points with the offence. This amounts to no more than a slap on the wrist. Plus, technology is too great a temptation for many drivers to ignore. Constant emails, text messages and social media postings cry out for instant responses from those who feel the need to be connected 24-7.

Drivers need to understand that operating a motor vehicle requires their full attention at all times. The slightest distraction, however justified in the driver's mind, could instantly lead to tragedy and alter lives forever. I urge all motorists to put away their devices and be part of the solution, not the problem. A commitment to focused driving will save lives — possibly your own.

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2009 HONDA ACCORD V6 EXL	BLACK	4DR AU AC ABS VCM Engine Loaded L.Seats Stereo/CD Alloys PSUN Certified Balance of Factory Warranty	18,052KM	90051	~~$22,888~~
2009 HONDA CIVIC DX-G	BLUE	4DR AU A/C ABS PW PI PM Stereo/ CD Alloys Certified Balance of Factory Warranty	39,574KM	90292	~~$12,888~~
2010 HONDA ACCORD EX-L 4CYL	WHITE	4DR 4CYL AU Loaded Leather Seats PSUN Alloys Certified Balance of Factory Warranty Jan 15, 2015	25,694KM	10243	~~$22,388~~

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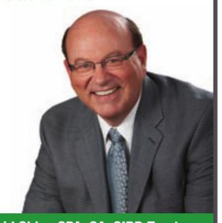

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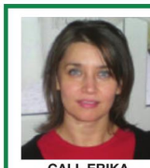

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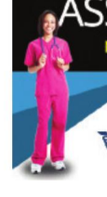

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Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
It's not like you to be so trusting but you are determined to see the best in people and your faith in human nature, temporary though it may be, will be rewarded today.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
You may have a pile of work to finish but shove it all to one side and worry about it at a later date. Most likely that "later" will never arrive and you'll be glad you did not waste time on trivia.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
Wherever you go over the next 24 hours, people will greet you with open arms. Why are you suddenly so popular? Because of your sunny nature, of course, and because you are rarely judgmental.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
You are getting obsessive about something and it's not healthy. It's unlikely you will just give up on it, so maybe you should indulge it — and get it out of your system.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
You don't have to carry the world on your shoulders. Friends and colleagues will make life easier for you today, but they will only succeed if you meet them halfway.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
You could easily spend lots of money and have nothing to show for it, so maybe you should leave your credit cards at home.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
People you meet today may not be very talkative but you will know exactly what they are thinking. If there is one thing you are good at, it is reading body language.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Scorpio is a sensitive sign and that sensitivity can be both a blessing and a curse. Which one it is today depends on how easily you let yourself be annoyed by petty events.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
You'll need to employ a certain amount of critical thinking over the next 24 hours, especially when dealing with new ideas, as some people may find them outrageous.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
You're in a friendly mood and that's good because the more you smile and say nice things the more you'll get the kind of offers you like. What kind are they? The kind that pay lots of money!

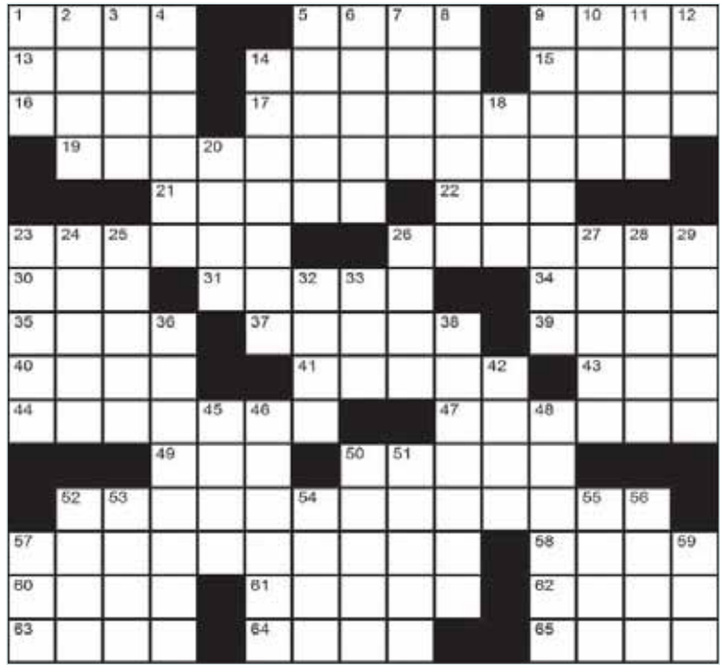
♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
You will be impatient with people who get in your way today but hopefully not so impatient that you start a fight. Slow down, calm down and try not to take little things personally — they're not.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
If you are confused about something then you must speak up, even though you don't like to admit to your ignorance in front of other people. The important thing is to get it right. SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.

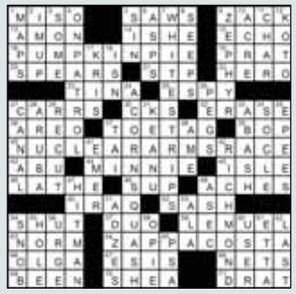
BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



Across
1. Gordon Pinsent's actress daughter
5. French words?
9. Konvicted rapper
13. Inventor, Thomas __ Edison
14. Flashdance (1983) star Michael
15. Ms. Downey of Touched by an Angel
16. Gladiator's 554
17. Bit of Ramble On by Led Zeppelin: "The __ __ lights my way."
19. Canadian actress who played Lily Munster: 3 wds.
21. Nova Scotia's Straight of __
22. Provincial song: __ to Newfoundland
23. Ornamental tree
26. Hip-Hop group, __ Boys
30. Ohh's kin
31. Moderner
34. Salon shade
35. Rattling sound from the chest
37. Shave the sheep
39. Comic actor Mr. Green
40. _.__ (British band)
41. Sarah McLachlan song
43. Mr. Gershwin
44. Caustic talk
47. Filet __
49. "Let me think..."
50. John Hersey's bell town
52. Madonna's pre-concerts rituals: 2 wds.
57. Fluently-bilingual-person job title
58. Minstrel's instrument
60. __ Kong
61. Comedian/actor Denis
62. Russian river
63. Border
64. Leaky balloon sounds
65. Tommy James & The Shondells tune, when repeated

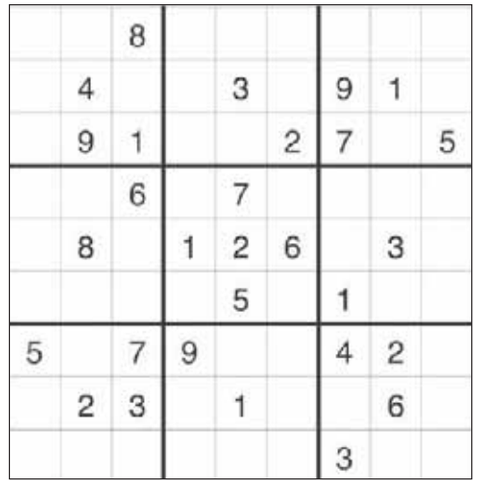
Down
1. Chap
2. Jed Clampett's daughter, __ May
3. Tel __
4. Mayhems
5. Pouting grimaces
6. Perform better than
7. Genuine
8. Big lake in Ontario
9. Captain's chair
10. __-Aid (Fun drink)
11. Herman Melville story
12. Book publisher, __ A. Talese
14. Jobs like filmdom's Miss McPhee's
18. Zippo
20. Flatbread variety
23. The Simpsons kid, and namesakes
24. Catherine of SCTV
25. Winnipeg Jet, e.g.
26. Talk big
27. Marketing link: 2 wds.
28. Short start?
29. Mr. Hawke
32. Brit pop duo!
33. Literary contraction
36. Toronto Stock __
38. Take the plunge again
42. The Mod Squad character, __ Hayes
45. Songstress Ms. Grant's
46. Uses one's nose
48. J.R.R. Tolkien character in the song at #17-Across
50. __ __ a go between (Mediate)
51. Gowns by designer Christian
52. Nudge
53. Called
54. Charlotte of TV, and others
55. Certain monetary unit
56. Saxophonist Mr. Getz
57. British band, when doubled
59. Cathedral city

Yesterday's Crossword



Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.



Yesterday's Sudoku

2	7	8	5	9	3	1	4	6
9	1	4	8	6	2	5	3	7
5	6	3	4	7	1	9	2	8
8	3	9	6	1	7	4	5	2
7	4	6	9	2	5	3	8	1
1	2	5	3	8	4	7	6	9
4	9	2	1	3	6	8	7	5
3	8	7	2	5	9	6	1	4
6	5	1	7	4	8	2	9	3

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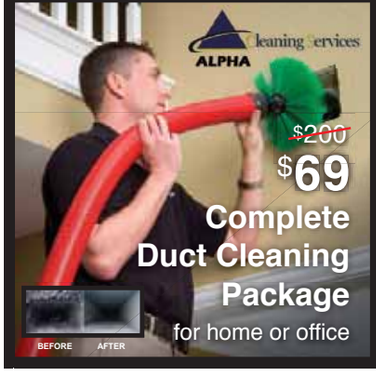

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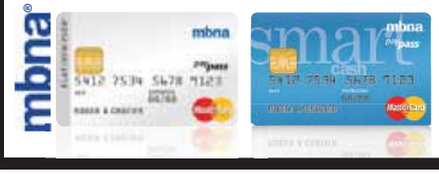

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A WISH LIST OF OPTIONS

Canadians love receiving reward points for their purchases — who doesn't like a little buying-power bonus of some kind? And the credit card choices featuring such points that are available to consumers are becoming more and more competitive.

With that in mind, banks are aiming to deliver credit cards their clients are looking for, and CIBC has upped the ante with its enhanced Aventura credit cards, which are more flexible than ever. Exciting new Aventura travel rewards features mean you can redeem reward points for travel on any airline, have access to every seat on the plane and fly for as few as 10,000 Aventura Points.

In addition, these cutting-edge credit cards get clients to their dream destination faster than ever. Other enhancements include new trip-cancellation insurance to complement the cards' medical and trip-interruption insurance.

Here is how it works: You will earn one Aventura Point for every $1 spent using your card. And you will have the ability to earn 1.5 Aventura Points on purchases at gas stations, grocery and drug stores. If you prefer, you can use a combination of points and cash to pay for your travel.

DIGITAL VISION/GETTY IMAGES/THINKSTOCK

Earlier this year, CIBC said it would roll out a market-leading travel rewards program to Canadians, and it has done that with this launch.

CIBC's new Aventura program was built on the feedback it collected from its clients and rewards collectors, who have become savvy about the pros and cons of the various programs flooding the market. In building the program, CIBC sat down with Canadians from across the country, listened to their feedback about current travel rewards programs and built the new Aventura with their wish list in mind.

DIGITAL VISION/THINKSTOCK

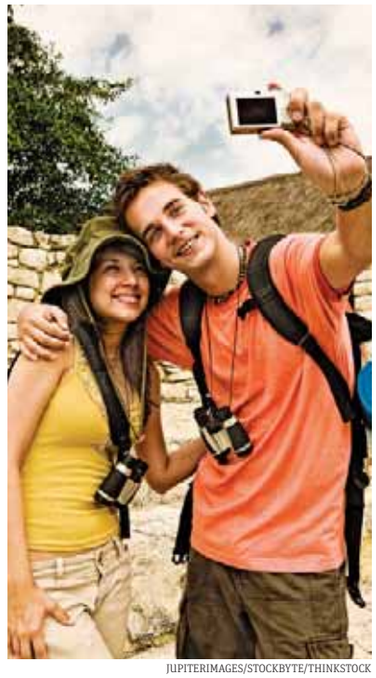
TRAVEL WITH NO WORRIES

The enhanced CIBC Aventura travel rewards program has the ideal credit cards to use when travelling, due to the added benefits on the cards, such as insurance protection.

That protection is valuable to Canadians since travelling isn't always free of worries — a CIBC poll conducted by Harris/Decima reveals that 36 per cent of Canadians worry about getting sick or injured while on vacation, 18 per cent are concerned about losing their money or credit cards, and 12 per cent fret about overspending.

To make the most of your vacation, CIBC offers these tips:

- Contact your credit card company to let them know you will be travelling. Advance notice can help ensure that your charges go through promptly and you will have use of your card for your holiday.
- Keep your cards and cash secure and have a backup form of payment. Keep them in separate locations and write down important phone numbers separately in case you lose a credit or debit card.
- Access benefits on your credit card to help stretch your budget. For example, your credit card may have features such as discounts on car rentals.
- Book your trip with your credit card to take advantage of any insurance offered on your card, as well as to maximize points.



JUPITERIMAGES/STOCKBYTE/THINKSTOCK

FLEXIBILTY TO BOOK ANY AIRLINE, ANY SEAT, ANYTIME

To create its enhanced Aventura credit cards, CIBC did its research and asked Canadians what they wanted in a travel rewards program.

Among the findings, two important needs stood out — clients wanted the ability to earn points faster, and the flexibility in knowing that they could access every seat on any airline.

Canadians also said it was important for them to earn extra points for everyday purchases, so Aventura's offer of 1.5 points on purchases at gas stations, grocery and drug stores was an attractive feature.

What's more, they didn't want any blackout periods or points expiry, and they wanted to be able to use points toward taxes and fees — all features that are part of the Aventura travel rewards program.

Canadian travel reward cardholders viewed CIBC's Aventura offer as attractive due to the value that Aventura Points provide toward travel costs and the ability to book travel without limitations — that means any airline, any seat, anytime.

You can book short-haul flights with Aventura for as low as 10,000 points and long-haul flights for as low as 25,000 points, and to get you started you will receive a special bonus of up to 30,000 Aventura Points.

REAP YOUR REWARDS FASTER

Loyalty programs offer the opportunity to be rewarded for purchases you make every day. However, with so many programs to choose from and so much information available, it is easy to miss out on the ones that would get you to your chosen reward faster.

To help clear through the clutter, a new, free online tool (compareloyaltyprograms.ca) asks a few simple questions and recommends up to three programs that will get you to your chosen rewards faster based on your preferred rewards, lifestyle and shopping habits. What's really new and unique about the tool is that it strategically evaluates cards based on "time to reward" or how quickly you can reach your desired reward.

According to the 2013 COLLOQUY Loyalty Census, the average Canadian household is involved in about eight loyalty programs. Rewards fall into three categories — cash, merchandise or travel — and, historically, people have signed up from the point-of-view of "how much do I have to spend in order to get rewards."

"But it's not just about the dividend or payout rate that these programs offer," says David MacDonald, group VP, custom/financial, Environics Research Group. "It's about how you accumulate points and how quickly you can get a reward of some sizable value to you."

The tool, which was created by Environics Research Group, is quick and simple to use. All you have to do is enter a bit of information about shopping preferences and habits, and which type of rewards you prefer. Then, the tool determines up to three Canadian loyalty programs or affiliated credit cards that are most likely to get you $100 in rewards faster.

The evaluation is based on substantial research into Canadians' habits using loyalty programs and what kinds of rewards they prefer, says Ken Wong, marketing professor at Queen's School of Business, Kingston, Ont., who reviewed and approved the research methodology.

"The tool provides just three cards to consider, and that is easier than consumers having to compare 20 or 30 programs."

Also, you can fill out the tool several times if you want to see how differences in shopping habits and choices impact the variables and the cards recommended.

"The three cards you are presented with make most sense for the spending patterns you have entered," MacDonald says.

HOW TO MAXIMIZE PROGRAMS

• Reduce the number of loyalty programs you belong to, says Frank Pons, professor of marketing, Laval University. "When people have a lot of loyalty programs and cards, the tendency is to disperse points. Cards are really efficient if you focus on just one or two specific programs."

• Aggregate your points. "The more often you use the same card, the more points you will accumulate, and the faster you will get rewards," says Ken Wong, marketing professor at Queen's School of Business.

HEMERA/THINKSTOCK

• Choose loyalty programs based on your lifestyle. If you have the same card you had as a student and now you are married with kids, you probably aren't taking full advantage of points. "Maybe one spouse should sign up for one rewards program and do most of the shopping in that category and the other person do another," says David MacDonald, group VP, custom/financial, Environics Research Group.

• Double dip. Take advantage of loyalty programs that are affiliated with a credit card. "I was using a loyalty card and an unaffiliated credit card, and that forced me to spread my points rather than put them together and double up points," Wong says.

• Be wise with credit. Credit card programs can be a great way to super-charge your time to reward — there are often additional bonus rewards simply by using the credit card. But if you don't pay off the credit card balance every month, Pons says, you end up paying interest and not making a lot of money.

TOP 20 IN CANADA

Here are the top 20 loyalty programs by percentage of usage in Canada, based on the percentage of Canadians who collected rewards over a three-month period in 2012.

- AIR MILES Reward Program — 68 per cent
- Shoppers Optimum — 30 per cent
- HBC Rewards — 26 per cent
- Canadian Tire Money — 23 per cent
- Aeroplan — 23 per cent
- PETRO-POINTS — 18 per cent
- PC Points — 13 per cent
- Scene — 10 per cent
- Club Sobeys — 10 per cent
- Sears Card — 10 per cent
- Esso Extra — eight per cent
- CAA — seven per cent
- Save-On-More — seven per cent
- Plum Rewards — seven per cent
- RBC Rewards — seven per cent
- Best Buy Rewards — six per cent
- RBC Avion — three per cent
- Desjardins — three per cent
- AMEX Rewards — three per cent
- Walmart Rewards — three per cent

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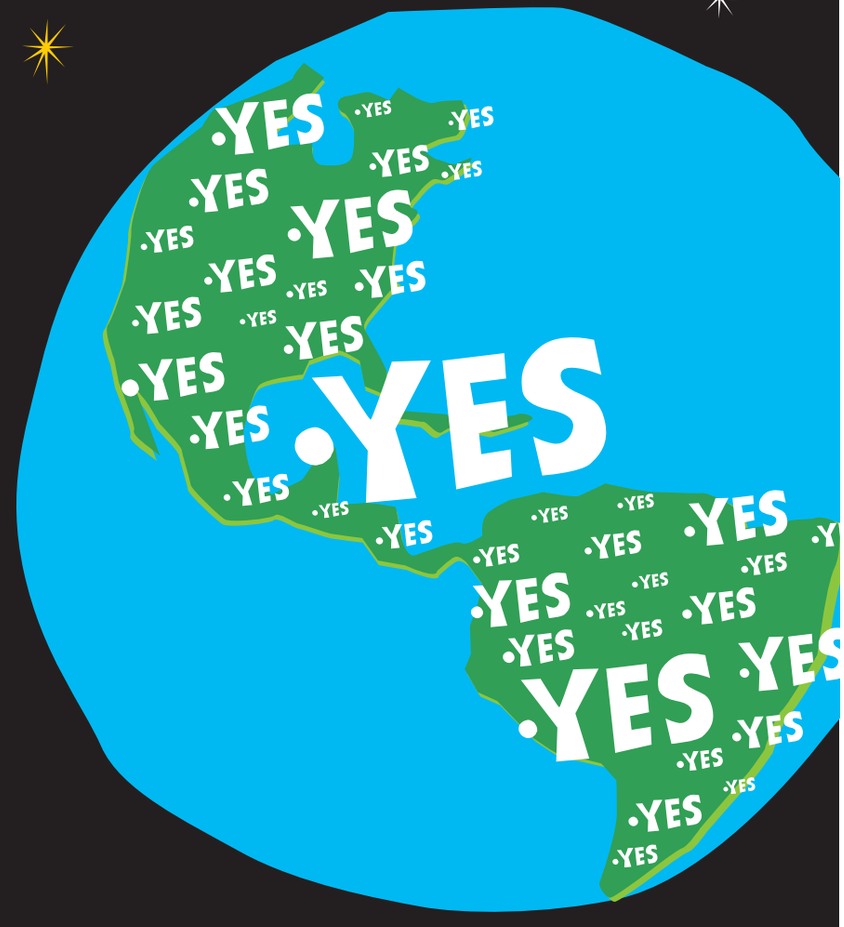

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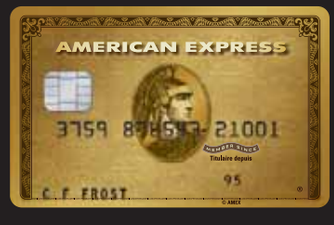

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HOW TO CUT OUT CARD CONFUSION

THREE TIPS FOR CHOOSING THE RIGHT CARD

Sometimes it seems that every time you turn around there is a new credit card available. Between offers for travel and dining rewards or cash back — and everything in between — it can be confusing to figure out which card will work best for you and your lifestyle. Before you make a decision, consider these simple tips to turn spending into the kinds of rewards and benefits that are relevant to you and your interests.

LEARN HOW TO MAXIMIZE POINTS

You work hard for your money, so it's important to choose a rewards program that will work hard for you. Consider a card that allows you to make the most out of your everyday spending. The American Express Gold Rewards Card, for example, offers an accelerated earn rate, meaning you earn two points for every dollar spent at grocery stores, gas stations and pharmacies, as well as on travel.

FIND FLEXIBILITY IN YOUR CREDIT CARD

The best cards allow you choice and flexibility in redeeming your reward points — they won't lock you into one program, but, instead, offer you an array of partner redemption opportunities. Choose a card that allows you to book a trip through any travel provider or transfer points to your favourite frequent flyer program, such as Aeroplan, Delta or British Airways. It's also important to look for a program that allows you to use points when you want, without worry about blackout dates or restrictions. You are in control of where you earn your reward points, so make sure you are in control of how you redeem them, too.,If this kind of flexibility is important to you, the American Express Gold Rewards Card might be the right card for your wallet.

CONSIDER ADDITIONAL PERKS

Your card benefits shouldn't stop at point redemption. With so many options out there, it's important that your card fit your unique lifestyle and bring additional perks that have relevance to you. For those who love entertainment and access, American Express cards offer a wide variety of benefits including Front Of The Line, which means Amex Cardmembers have access to concert and theatre tickets before they go on sale to the general public. Scoring a front row seat is just one of the many benefits that come with being a Cardmember.

To figure out which card most closely matches your needs, check out rewardscanada.ca for a complete ranking of Canada's top travel rewards cards.

ISTOCK/THINKSTOCK

VISIT ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME VACATION DESTINATIONS

This fall, the Starwood Preferred Guest® Credit Card from American Express is the faster way to "I'll never forget" from "I wish."

American Express and Starwood Preferred Guest can provide you with the best destinations, whether it's for a weekend getaway or a weeklong vacation.

Cardmembers can use their Starpoints® to bid on exclusive Moments by SPG experiences at some of the hottest events in music, sports and the arts around the world, turning any tourist into a VIP.

NEW YORK CITY

Whether it's your first or 100th time visiting the Big Apple, there is nothing quite like taking in a Broadway show from the front row or stepping behind the curtain. This fall, American Express SPG Cardmembers can use their Starpoints to bid on exclusive cast member meet-and-greets, wardrobe tours, VIP post-show receptions, and premium seats at some of the most talked about Broadway shows.

COLOURBOX

RUSSIA

Experience the luxury and exquisite cuisine found in breathtaking Russia. Spend two nights at the W St. Petersburg, while exploring Venice of the North. And what better way to fuel your adventures than by enjoying the best in local and imported ingredients when you attend an exclusive dinner hosted by renowned chef Alain Ducasse. See a master of his craft at work as Ducasse brings to life vivacious flavours of the region.

COLOURBOX

ENGLAND

Is there a better moment for rock 'n' roll enthusiasts than visiting the birthplace of rock legends The Rolling Stones? There is if you are part of an intimate audience as Bill Wyman talks with music journalist David Hepworth about his new photo book, the Bill Wyman Scrapbook, at Le Meridien Piccadilly in London. Rub shoulders with music elite and have your picture taken with the former bassist from the greatest Rock 'n' Roll Band in the World. It's an experience friends will have to see to believe.

Visit AmericanExpress.ca/spg to discover how you could start earning Starpoints with the Starwood Preferred Guest Credit Card from American Express.

CONTRIBUTED

LOYALTY LOVE AFFAIR

Consumer loyalty programs have become an ingrained part of Canadian life. From the iconic Canadian Tire money to the latest digital smartphone wizardry, competition continues to evolve and raise the stakes for businesses and deliver benefits to consumers.

Canadians are global leaders in loyalty program participation. The average Canadian household is active in 9.2 programs. By comparison, the average American household is active in only 6.2 programs.

An ongoing study by Canadian research firm Abacus Data found that an astounding nine in 10 Canadian adults belong to loyalty programs.

"These statistics haven't really shifted much during the three surveys we conducted in 2013," says Sean Copeland, Abacus Data's director of consumer research. "We consistently see most Canadians using three or more rewards programs on a regular basis to collect points or miles for future redemption."

The most popular loyalty programs in Canada are Air Miles Rewards (seven in 10 Canadians), and the Shoppers Optimum program (three in 10 Canadians). While these cards won't disappear from Canadian wallets anytime soon, there are big changes on the horizon as Canadian businesses adjust to the shifting consumer loyalty landscape.

Research shows Canadians are most interested in loyalty programs that are simple, clear, and deliver instant rewards.

The American retail giant Target, currently opening stores in Canada, is taking heed. Target's "Red Card," a branded debit or credit card, gives shoppers an instant five per cent off at checkout for every purchase.

Target aims to not only draw new customers, but to also fill each shopping cart with a little more merchandise. Experts contend that the Red Card adds between one and two per cent to the total of each checkout at Target, and more established Canadian competitors are expected to follow suit with similar offers.

An emerging trend in consumer loyalty programs is the use of smartphone-based applications to replace physical cards.

Canada's largest grocer recently launched a new digital loyalty program targeting customers with individually tailored promotions. PC Plus, the Loblaw program, targets customers using their purchase histories, offering discounts on items they buy regularly, along with products they might be interested in, but need an incentive to try.

– Peter Doyle

CONSUMERS WANT MORE AND WANT IT NOW

While Canadians are still very much in love with consumer loyalty programs, it appears the relationship has moved into a new and more demanding phase.

Token gifts and promises are no longer enough — consumers now want bigger rewards, and expect to be able to access them sooner.

The attitude shift became clear following Loblaw's acquisition of Shoppers Drug Mart. Optimum, the pharmacy retailer's rewards card, is Canada's most popular customer reward program. When the acquisition was announced, Optimum members flooded social media sites and the program's call centre with their concerns. Both retail chains were forced to reassure consumers about the program's future.

"Canadians have grown up with loyalty programs in many circumstances, so there's almost an expectation," says Kevin O'Brien, chief commercial officer at Aeroplan Canada.

O'Brien is all too familiar with the potential consequences of failing to meet consumer expectations. In 2006, Aeroplan announced an expiry date for points accumulated under the program.

DMITRY KALINOVSKY/COLOURBOX

Not surprisingly, consumer reaction was intensely negative and Aeroplan's subsequent struggles led to a complete redesign of the program — and new credit card partners — earlier this year.

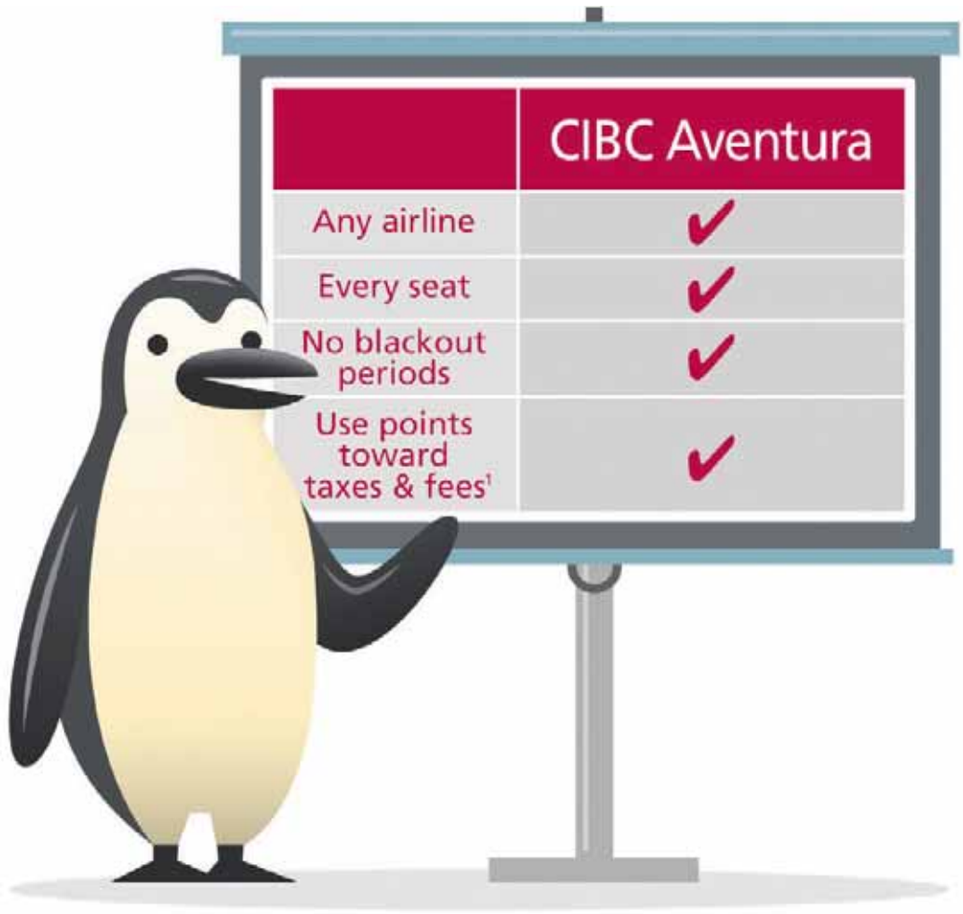
Clearly, consumers no longer consider rewards a simple perk; today, they expect to be properly compensated for their loyalty. Most members of customer loyalty programs recognize they are providing retailers with valuable information; they are determined to get something in return. Goodbye romance, hello interest-based negotiations.

A 2013 white paper published by Environics Research reflects just how much the loyalty program landscape has shifted. The paper reviewed 22 loyalty programs and outlines a new way to determine their relative value — a measure it calls "time to reward." The new measure takes into account both the potential value of reward points a consumer receives for a given purchase, as well as the amount of shopping required before "cashing in" those points.

"When it comes to loyalty programs, what is ultimately most important to the consumer is being able to understand how long it will take them to achieve their desired reward," the study states.

The report suggests that the best way to meet these expectations — and to retain members — is to provide consumers with opportunities to collect points quickly, such as through "double-dip" offers (twice the amount of rewards for buying specific products).

– Peter Doyle



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LOYALTY & REWARDS

In love with loyalty programs

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